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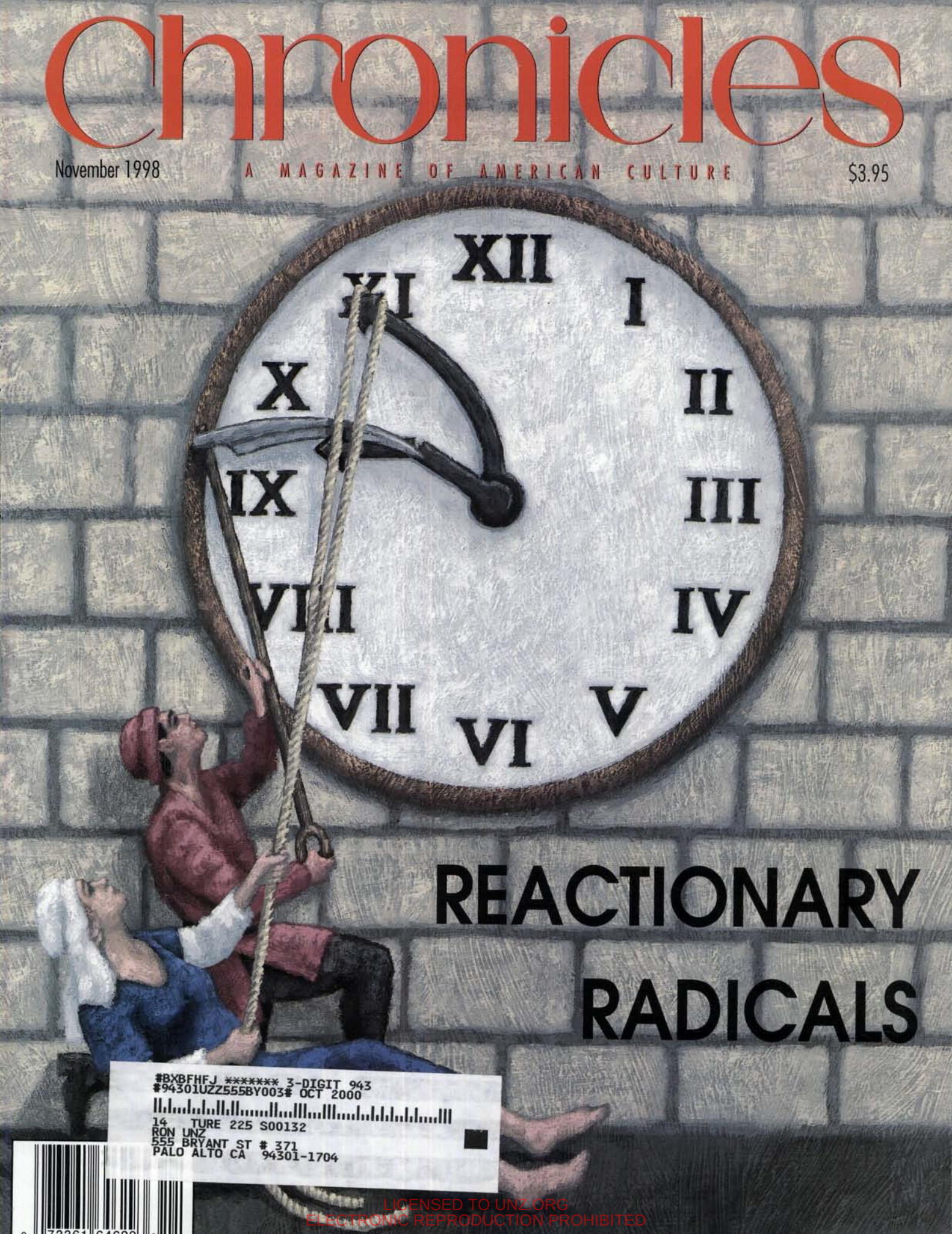

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Fat and Fatter

Ralph Reiland ("Cultural Revolutions," August) find himself in the same camp as the AIDS activists in insisting that political philosophy dictate physiology. The AIDS activists say "AIDS is everyone's disease" because they can't stand the idea of a virus disproportionately affecting them. Reiland pooh-poohs mountains of evidence of obesity's harmfulness (heavily documented in my book *The Fat of the Land*) because he's afraid it will be used to implement public policy he doesn't care for.

For more than a century, insurance actuaries have noted that, on the whole, the fatter you are, the more often you'll be sick and the sooner you'll die. They adjusted their premiums accordingly. And in recent decades, epidemiologists have quantified what the actuaries have always known. The new government standard considers unhealthy a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or above. (BMI is your weight in pounds multiplied by 705, divided by your height in inches and again by your height in inches.) Studies in the United States and throughout the world have shown BMIs above 25 to correlate with premature heart attacks, stroke, cancer, diabetes, myriad other illnesses, and overall premature death. Over half of Americans have a BMI above 25.

Consider the three largest American obesity studies of the 1990's. The largest, released in January and comprising over 300,000 men and women, found that longest life was associated with the leanest bodies, specifically with a BMI between 19 and 22. Thirty- to 44-year-old men averaging six feet tall who were just 39 pounds overweight (a BMI of 25.3) increased their relative chance of death by 50 percent. The second-largest study, of female nurses, found a slight correlation between premature death and higher BMIs at less than 25, and the correlation increased appreciably at 25. The third-largest, of Harvard male alumni, found that the thinnest one-fifth lived the longest. Their average BMI was 22.5.

William Castelli, former director of the longest-running study of men's health, the Framingham Heart Study, put it bluntly: "The lower your weight, the better off you are." (Obviously this excludes starvation or anorexia, but this would be a BMI of well below 17.)

If Reiland had bothered to read my book instead of just attacking it, he would know that it deals with the lone source he cites to make his case, Glenn A. Gaesser, at great length. Gaesser, who is the first to admit that his findings are out of sync with those of the top obesity researchers in the country, is a major proponent of the "fat but fit" philosophy. But while it's true that a 350-pound woman who walks a mile a day is better off than one who doesn't, there is no substitute for weight loss.

This was shown in a study published in the December 27, 1995, *Journal of the American Medical Association*. One group of men pursued a moderate nine-month weight loss regimen, eventually losing an average of 21 pounds; another group remained obese but engaged in regular aerobic exercise. In nearly every measured risk factor for heart disease, the benefits of weight loss outweighed those of exercise.

But what of those obese persons who proclaim on the basis of a few blood tests that they are in fine health? Gaesser writes of "Lucy" who, though 206 pounds at only five feet, five inches, "has excellent levels of cholesterol, blood sugar, and blood pressure."

The trouble is that Lucy is only 30. Give a few medical tests to a four-pack-a-day smoker at the same age and you can expect her to pass with flying colors, too. Just as almost nobody dies of lung cancer at 30, almost nobody dies from obesity at such a young age. It's only after menopause, which usually takes place around the late 40's or early 50's, that a woman's risk of dying of heart disease starts to go up. Let's see how Lucy is doing when she's up to 300 pounds at age 50. We might have to visit her at the cemetery.

Even Gaesser admits that excess weight is deadly. He states, for example, that abdominal fat appears to be responsible for "such killers as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes." But anyone who's extremely fat carries a large portion of it in the abdominal area; men in general

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carry most of their fat in the abdominal area, and so do many post-menopausal women. Gaesser is essentially saying that bullets are harmless—so long as they don't strike you.

The evidence is incontrovertible. More fat equals shorter life and more illness. There's plenty of room to argue about what should be done to curtail the obesity epidemic, but it is very real and very deadly.

—Michael Fumento
Arlington, VA

On Christian Vegetarianism

Many of us eat without giving a thought to the miserable lives and violent, bloody deaths of the animals on our plates. Christians have a choice. We can add to the level of violence, suffering, and death in the world, or we can attempt to withdraw our support for violence and bloodshed wherever and whenever we find it.

More than eight billion animals are killed every year for food in this country. The vast majority are raised on "factory farms." Every one has the capacity for pain and suffering, just as our own cats, dogs, and other companion animals do. I have been to slaughterhouses and farms and can tell you that conditions are ruthlessly violent and inhumane—the antithesis of Christian charity. Christians can easily follow the compassionate Christ by adopting a vegetarian diet.

When considering Jesus' vegetarianism, remember that Jesus spoke in Aramaic, the Gospels were written in Hebrew generations after the Resurrection, and the earliest translations we have are Greek translations from the fourth century (more than 300 years, two translations, and many transcriptions post-Resurrection). When discerning the true nature of the historical Jesus, one must rely on more than strictly biblical accounts.

Those who cite biblical justification for eating the flesh of animals should remember that Paul's letters and the Hebrew Scriptures have been used since time immemorial to justify many merciless, cruel, and unchristian activities, including child and spousal abuse, slavery, witch burnings, and the persecution of scientists such as Copernicus and Galileo. It is unfortunate that Christians continue to misappropriate the Bible to justify actions and activities so antithetical to Christ's call to mercy and compassion.

Christians must transcend our bias on the basis of species, in the same way we have transcended earlier biases based on race and gender. Human beings are not the only of God's creatures who deserve consideration.

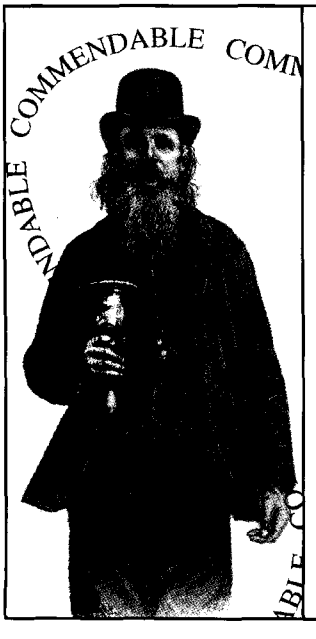
For more information on Christian vegetarianism, readers can visit our website at *www.jesus-online.com*. As we do to the least, we do to Him.

—Bruce G. Friedrich
Vegetarian Campaign Coordinator
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
Norfolk, VA

Mr. Richert Replies:

I'm not surprised that Mr. Friedrich didn't respond to any of the points in my article ("Of Steak and Suicide," August). After all, his is a typical bad faith argument: he knows that Christianity does not require vegetarianism, but he's willing to invoke the moral authority of the Church in a crusade that would ultimately undermine Christianity itself. PETA's "Jesus Was a Vegetarian" website quotes extensively from the Bible, but when confronted with biblical references that run counter to his argument, Mr. Friedrich declares that "one must rely on more than strictly biblical accounts." For Catholics such as Mr. Friedrich and myself, chief among the extra-biblical sources should be Sacred Tradition and the teaching authority of the Church, both of which sanction the humane use of animals for food, clothing, labor, and mutual pleasure. But instead, Mr. Friedrich turns to texts written by Gnostics and Jewish ascetics, which are clearly contradicted by St. Peter's vision in Acts 10.

Long-time readers of *Chronicles* will remember Stephen R.L. Clark's "Conservation and Animal Welfare" (June 1996), an intelligent exposition of our "bargain with domestic creatures" and of the duty that we owe to animals, wild and tame. Alone among conservative publications, *Chronicles* has consistently upheld the traditional Christian view of stewardship of the land and its creatures. I share Mr. Friedrich's dislike of factory farms and modern slaughterhouses, and at the conclusion of our interview, we discussed the numerous problems with treating animals as an "industrial product." But while I would prefer to return to the family farm, the local slaughterhouse, and the animal husbandry practiced by my ancestors, Mr. Friedrich made it clear that he would oppose those institutions as vigorously as he opposes factory farms. His understanding of "Christ's call to mercy and compassion" is a monumental impiety which substitutes his peculiar view of the equality of species for 2,000 years of Christian doctrine, and condemns all who came before him—including, perhaps, Christ Himself, whom Mr. Friedrich admits may have eaten meat—to the liberal hell of insensitivity.



Robert Nisbet, *The Sociological Tradition* (Transaction). This classic work examines the origins of sociology in French counterrevolutionary thought.

Dumas Malone, *Jefferson and His Time* (Little, Brown). Jefferson becomes more conservative in each successive volume of Malone's monumental six-volume biography.

Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness* (Harper San Francisco). The autobiography of the founder of the Catholic Worker movement reveals how wrong conservatives have been about Day, and how much the Catholic Worker movement has changed since her death.

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THE ICC, the International Criminal Court—the proposed judicial arm of the New World Order—is one step closer to becoming a reality. For five weeks this summer, the United Nations engaged in a protracted, angry, and dangerous debate on the establishment of the ICC. In the mainstream Western media, the ICC was portrayed as a permanent war crimes tribunal, a perpetual Nuremberg court. But in the plenary assemblies and conference rooms, a debate raged over the anti-family "social engineering" agenda which a few developed countries (notably Canada) were trying to foist on the rest of the world.

The discussion in Rome focused not on war criminals like Cambodia's Pol Pot but on the inclusion of "enforced pregnancy" as a war crime and on the ICC's commitment to a "gender perspective" in its deliberations. Both are code phrases, like those promoted by the influential Women's Caucus at earlier U.N. conferences in Beijing, Istanbul, and Cairo. The first means "denying pregnant woman an abortion," and the second means prosecuting "gender crimes" like discrimination against homosexuals. In addition, the U.N. globalists wanted complete prosecutorial independence for the ICC, something relatively useless in an active war zone, but just the thing for muscling small, traditional countries that still have legal restraints on "reproductive freedom" (more U.N.-speak for abortion).

On the one side of the debate were the so-called "soft-power" countries like Canada, Britain, and Holland, together with the U.N. "apparatchiks" and virtually all of the world media. On the other side, largely unreported, were the Holy See, most of the Catholic and Muslim countries of the Southern Hemisphere, and the United States. The maneuverings were often dishonest, with Canada in particular scheduling meetings that deliberately excluded Muslim countries, and interpreters were frequently excluded from the English-language deliberations. By the time the final document came up for a vote, however, the definition of "enforced pregnancy" was tightened up to condemn only the "forcible confinement" of a pregnant woman, previously raped in order to alter the ethnic composition of a territory.

Given the "global juggernaut," some 100-plus countries voted for the agreement, only eight voted against it (the United States, Israel, China, Costa Rica, Iraq, Libya, Qatar, and Yemen), and 60-plus countries abstained (mostly from the Southern Hemisphere). Secretary General Kofi Annan boasted that the U.N. had taken the first step toward a "global human rights tribunal"—which is to say, something more than the advertised war crimes court.

Before the Rome agreement becomes international law, however, it must be ratified by the governments of at least 60 countries. The "Law of the Sea" convention, a generation ago, took 12 years to get 60 countries signed on. In the case of the far more contentious ICC, some countries (like the Russian Federation) clearly agreed to it with no intention whatsoever of ratifying it. So it may end up simply lingering, like an unwanted houseguest.

Does this mean that the ICC agreement is toothless? No. For years, the Canadian government (for one) has tried to use international agreements to advance domestic agendas it could never get past its own parliament. At the 1994 Beijing Conference on Women, for example, the Canadian delegation was at the forefront of the attempt to enshrine "five genders" in international law; and some of the more notable Canadian "anti-spanking" court cases refer to the (anti-parental) U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, a document that has no binding legal force. Canadian Supreme Court Chief Justice Antonio Lamer has said that the court has a duty to enforce international agreements, "even if they have not yet been ratified."

For those countries lucky enough to enjoy the rule of law, "customary international law" has always been incorporated into their domestic codes. But these days, thanks to the U.N. and its "soft-power" puppet masters, "customary law" is changing almost weekly. There is nothing to stop the existing ad hoc war crimes tribunals from using Rome's incomplete "gender crimes" agreement to enforce gay "refugee reunification" rights. And with that international precedent, there would be nothing to stop an immigration court judge, even in the United States, from ordering gay "family reunification" rights. Perhaps the judges might restrain themselves.

—*Joseph K. Woodard*

BILL CLINTON may be the most dishonored President in American history, but who is to blame for his ascension to the White House? George Bush, who waged an incompetent campaign for re-election? Bob Dole, tongue-tied and incomprehensible, unburdened by principle? Yes—but the fullest answer is more simple.

At the heart of it, Bill Clinton was elected because he's us. Sadly, as his sky-high job approval numbers show, he is the cultural distillation of what we have become, the microcosm of our nation.

He was elected because he embodies the decadence of American society since the 1960's, a decadence of leisure and consumption rather than work, of sex freed from procreation, of the yearning for recreation and visual pleasure. In earlier times, commerce served as a ballast. Before the 1960's, business was square and seemingly getting more so. But then came the upheaval in the "knowledge sector," the marketing of new ideas and information which has as its goal the unmooring of convention.

It is not coincidental that this sector, fueled by Hollywood, has heavily funded Bill Clinton. He owes his election not just to its money but to the adulation of those subtle and highly dexterous profiteering entrepreneurs whose adoption of the trademark "cool" has given us the situational ethics we admire . . . and in return for which Clinton, the ex-pro-lifer, became the morally neutered abortion and gay rights President.

Since the post-industrial culture we so passionately admire produced Bill Clinton, it is understandable that, in his disgrace, we take the hit for him now. If he lied to us, we yearned to be lied to. We have adopted the shrug as the symbol of our nation. When he came to us as a draft dodger, we shrugged; as an all-but-confirmed uncontrite adulterer, we shrugged. When he rented our national treasure for fundraisers, we shrugged. When he made a fool of his wife and

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daughter, we shrugged. When he feminized the military, corrupted its fighting forces with unisex cohabitation, we shrugged. He's us.

He's us, but please don't say that he is the "Great Communicator"—better than Reagan or Roosevelt. For those of us with long memories, this is outrageously wrong. He has not coined a single phrase, but engages in lachrymose pandering of unutterable tedium. His shortest speech—four minutes—came when he tried to tell the truth. No, Clinton could not have been elected at any other time but ours and by any other people but us. Any other era would have unmasked his moral false-face. He won because, like him, we are addicted, hooked on pleasure.

In this century, great problems gave us our edge. We survived the Great Depression, won a world war against fascism, and won the Cold War. Now, freed of such tests, we're re-learning what all civilizations have learned: prosperity breeds self-absorption.

So don't blame it all on Clinton; we freely bought him. That's why it's only right that we should stick with him, not dump him or impeach him. We always said that what he does in private doesn't matter, didn't we? Let him serve as our national expiation.

—*Thomas Roeser*

QUEBEC SECESSION was the subject of an historic judgment handed down by the supreme court of Canada on August 20, 1998. This question reached the court by a "reference" or "*renvoi*" initiated by the governor general, in effect a request by the Prime Minister and his cabinet for an advisory opinion. The judgment is not binding or enforceable by writs as in ordinary litigation, but is judicial advice given to the government of Canada.

The court held that, while the government of Quebec has no constitutional right to work a unilateral secession of the province from Canada, the people of Quebec enjoy a constitutional right to have a referendum at public expense and without interference, and that, if the people of Quebec clearly vote for independence, the government of Canada has a constitutional duty to negotiate in good faith to accommodate their expressed desire.

Canada, a dominion originally established under the authority of the British Empire, has by degrees become independent through organic statutes and constitutional conventions, yet even now is organized around the British Crown. This dominion is a legal instrument of alliance between many nations, peoples, languages, and cultures, spread out over the face of a great continent, so that they might live together in peace and friendship, share their prosperity, and aid each other in time of need. Canada is a confederation of ten provinces which are rich in natural resources, full of incredible beauty, and inhabited by an intelligent population.

The United States were established to accommodate two main civilizations, one commercial and modern in the North, the other agrarian and quasi-feudal in the South. Likewise, Canada was established to accommodate two main civilizations: the older French and Catholic, more European in outlook, the other founded by loyalist refugees from the American Revolution, and also by later English, Scottish, and Irish immigrants.

The original British North America Act of 1867 established a bilingual country with a bilingual government. In time, the French and Catholic civilization became a minority with a geopolitical center in Quebec, while Anglo-Canada became dominant in nine provinces. The people of Quebec refuse to be absorbed, and they intend to remain a distinct society—by constitutional accommodation with Anglo-Canada if possible, by independence if necessary.

At the moment, separatism is an active force in Quebec, mainly because a new constitution (the Canada Act of 1982) was imposed upon Quebec over the protest of her elected government. The Meech Lake Accord, an accommodation designed to repair the injury done in 1982, was approved by the Prime Minister of Canada and the premiers of all ten provinces in 1987 but was wantonly sabotaged in 1990 by politicians who acted from passion and prejudice against the French in Quebec.

I agree with Queen Elizabeth II, who said on her last visit in 1997 that Canada is precious. For this reason, I am anxious to see a calming of separatist feelings in Quebec, which can be accomplished only by moderation and justice.

I think that Anglo-Canada and Quebec can be easily reconciled by the immediate adoption of the Meech Lake Accord as originally negotiated in 1987. This much is owed as a debt of honor to Quebec. The process could be recommenced by resolution of the dominion Parliament, but I believe there is a shortcut which doesn't open old political wounds.

The accord was defeated because of the mistaken belief that it had to be approved by all ten provinces within three years of proposal. This idea developed because the political leaders of the day inadvertently overlooked Section 42 of the Constitution Act of 1982, which disallows their assumption. The distinct society clause (which grants Quebec a special status) and most other elements of the accord received sufficient votes from seven provinces representing more than half the population within three years. It now appears that the items already approved by a sufficient number of provinces can be promulgated *nunc pro tunc* by the governor general on the advice of the Prime Minister of Canada. The remainder of the accord, requiring unanimous approval, can be adopted at leisure by the two provinces which have yet to give their assent.

In their recent judgment, the supreme court of Canada held that there is no right of secession in the Constitution Acts of 1867-1982. The court was right insofar as these organic statutes include no express right or constitutional mechanism for secession. Yet by implication, the court wholly repudiated the course taken by Abraham Lincoln against the South in 1861-1865. The justices understood the truth stated by President James Buchanan on the occasion of Lincoln's election in 1860: "Our Union rests upon public opinion, and can never be cemented by the blood of its citizens shed in a civil war. If it cannot live in the affections of the people, it must one day perish. Congress possesses many means of preserving it by conciliation, but the sword was not placed in their hands to preserve it."

The supreme court of Canada has given advice to the Prime Minister of Canada not unlike the advice given by the House of Lords to James II in 1688. The Lords advised His Majesty to seek reconciliation by calling a free Parliament. James II did not take this advice, but there was a free Parliament anyway, which produced an extra-constitutional but peaceable transformation in government. This "Glorious Revolution" ushered in the reign of William and Mary. Upon this transformation, the Crown of

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Great Britain and of Canada now rests.

The supreme court of Canada did not quote what Sir William Blackstone said about the Glorious Revolution: "In these, therefore, or other circumstances which a fertile imagination may furnish, since both law and history are silent, it behooves us to be silent too, leaving to future generations, whenever necessity and the safety of the whole shall require it, the exertion of those inherent though latent powers of society which no climate, no time, no constitution, no contract can ever destroy or diminish." Even so, the judgment concludes by saying that, although there is no formal legal right of secession, "this does not exclude the possibility of an unconstitutional secession which might ripen into a secession *de facto*."

Nor did the court comment on the remark about secession made by Jean-Claude Turcotte, cardinal archbishop of Montreal, on New Year's Day 1998: "The supreme court can say what it wants. Even if they say that the right does not exist, if the people decide to do it, the people are sovereign."

Let us hope that the danger of separation will induce an honorable reconciliation with Quebec. If this happens, as I ardently hope, Canada will become the moral leader of all nations.

—*John Remington Graham*

ZBIGNIEW HERBERT died on July 28. I first became familiar with Herbert's work in 1984, when Leopold Tyrmand invited me to become managing editor of *Chronicles*. In discussing future candidates for The Ingersoll Prizes, Tyrmand repeatedly brought up Mr. Herbert as a future winner. Although I could not read Polish, Herbert's verse made a deep impression on me, both for its intellectual seriousness and for its lyricism. When I became executive secretary of The Ingersoll Prizes in 1985, I already had Herbert on my mind as a future winner, but it was not until ten years later that I found a group of jurors who agreed with me.

Mr. Herbert's health did not, in the end, allow him to come to Chicago, but we paid tribute to him as best we could. I used the occasion to praise Herbert as a poet of civilization in a very uncivilized century:

"The ideological revolutions of this century have been intellectually and morally subversive; they have also done their best to destroy the decent institutions that make everyday life bearable—the free market, the family, religious faith. They deprived more than a billion people of their political liberty and quite literally murdered hundreds of millions of human beings. Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot—so much weak flesh burned in the purifying fire of their powerful ideologies.

"No country suffered a worse fate than Poland, overrun first by the Nazis and then by the communists. Zbigniew Herbert was 15 years old in 1939, when the German tanks rolled into Poland, and he was to spend the war years in the Polish resistance. When the communists took up where the Nazis left off, Mr. Herbert continued his resistance, refusing to collaborate with the literary and intellectual commissars who put themselves in charge of Poland's cultural institutions.

"But for all the darkness of the times, Herbert's poetry is anything but defeatist. This is not to say that he is an optimist. I can think of no poet who has so well captured the sense of what it is like to live not only under subjugation but also in a society in which people have forgotten how to fight. In 'Report From a Besieged City,' he describes a city under siege, abandoned by its allies, and weakened in its resolve: 'and if the city falls but a single man escapes / he will carry the city within himself on the roads of exile / he will be the city.'

"Zbigniew Herbert is that man, and the city is not just Poland but, in a larger sense, it is the life of all cities, civilization itself he carries with him. Like T.S. Eliot (in whose name this prize is given), Herbert is devoted to the legends and literature of the ancients. His classicism is explicit in several of his finest poems, and in 'Why the Classics?' he pays tribute to the hard-edged realism of Thucydides, who was honest even about his own failure.

"The late Leopold Tyrmand, who lived through the same period, used to tell me that Herbert was unquestionably the greatest Polish writer of the 20th century, and although the two friends parted over a misunderstanding, Tyrmand never ceased to revere Herbert as a man who was—above all things—a faithful and loyal friend who never put either self-interest or ideology above friendship. As a result, one of the greatest poets of our time has lived his life in poverty and obscurity.

"Seamus Heaney (the 1995 winner of the Nobel Prize for literature) called Zbigniew Herbert the next Nobel Prize winner . . ."

Alas it was not to be, but the failure was not Herbert's but that of the literary drudges who cannot recognize true merit. The Ingersoll Prizes have been described more than once as the sane alternative to the Nobel, and in presenting the T.S. Eliot Award to Zbigniew Herbert, The Ingersoll Foundation lived up to that claim.

—*Thomas Fleming*

THE 1998 INGERSOLL PRIZE recipients are **Madison Jones** and **Antony Flew**. At a ceremony at the Newberry Library in Chicago on November 1, Flew will receive the Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters; Jones, the T.S. Eliot Award for Creative Writing. The awards, each of which carries a cash prize of $20,000, recognize writers of abiding importance whose works affirm the fundamental principles of Western civilization.

Madison Jones was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1925. Reared in and near Nashville, Jones received his bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University in 1949. He undertook graduate studies at the University of Florida, receiving his master's degree in 1951. He taught English at Miami University of Ohio and the University of Tennessee, and spent most of his academic career at Auburn University, where he is currently professor emeritus and University Writer-in-Residence, emeritus.

Jones is the author of ten novels, including *A Buried Land* (1963), *A Cry of Absence* (1971), and *Passage Through Gehenna* (1978). His 1967 novel, *An Exile*, was made into the 1970 John Frankenheimer film, *I Walk the Line*, starring Gregory Peck, Tuesday Weld, and Johnny Cash. His most recent novel, *Nashville 1864: The Dying of the Light* (1997), won the first annual Michael Shaara Award for Civil War Fiction. His articles and reviews have appeared in the *New York Times Book Review*, *Washington Post Book World*, *Sewanee Review*, and *South Atlantic Quarterly*, among others. His many honors include a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship (1968), a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship (1973-74), and the *Sewanee Review*'s Lytle Prize for Short Fiction (1992). He and his wife, Shailah, have five children.

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Thomas Fleming, executive secretary of The Ingersoll Prizes, says Madison Jones is "a novelist who has not been afraid to tackle the most pressing social and moral issues of our time. His fifth novel, *A Cry of Absence*, is the most serious fictional exploration of the painful dilemma of American race relations I have encountered. Often considered a novelist's novelist, he has won the plaudits of his most important contemporaries. As Flannery O'Connor once said of him, 'He's so much better than the ones all the shouting is about.'" Writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, Ovid Pierce proclaimed of Jones that "outside of Faulkner, few writers have been able to command such a range of country with so much atmospheric detail . . . nor have they been able to capture so well the air of defeat over forgotten little towns."

British philosopher Antony Garrard Newton Flew was born in London in 1923. He studied at St. John's College, Oxford, where he received First Class Honours in *Litterae Humaniores* (1947) and was awarded the John Locke Scholarship in Mental Philosophy (1948). He has taught philosophy and moral philosophy at, among other schools, Christ Church, Oxford; King's College, Aberdeen; the University of Keele; and the University of Reading, where he is professor emeritus. Flew is the editor of 12 books and the author of 24, including *Hume's Philosophy of Belief* (1961), *Thinking About Thinking* (1975), *A Rational Animal: Philosophical Essays on the Nature of Man* (1978), and *Power to the Parents: Reversing Educational Decline* (1987). His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Libertarian Studies*, the *Journal des Economistes et des Etudes Humaines*, *Encounter*, and *Hume Studies*, among many other journals. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Keele in 1974 and was made a laureate of the Academy of Humanism in 1983. He and his wife have two daughters.

"Antony Flew is the foremost conservative philosopher in the English-speaking world today," noted Thomas Fleming. "Turning against the collectivist mentality that has dominated philosophy since the 1940's, Flew has devoted his career to the defense of individual dignity. In the tradition of British philosophers like David Hume, Flew is a brilliant analyst of individual rights and duties who has not shrunk from the important political debates of our time. He has affirmed parental prerogatives against the power of the state and, in an era of European amalgamation, has defended the authentic sovereignty of Britain."

The Ingersoll Foundation is the philanthropic division of the Ingersoll Milling Machine Company of Rockford, Illinois. The Rockford Institute administers the prizes. The past recipients of the T.S. Eliot Award are Jean Raspail (1997), Richard Wilbur (1996), Zbigniew Herbert (1995), Wendell Berry (1994), Fred Chappell (1993), Muriel Spark (1992), Mario Vargas Llosa (1991), Charles Causley (1990), George Garrett (1989), Walker Percy (1988), Octavio Paz (1987), V.S. Naipaul (1986), Eugène Ionesco (1985), Anthony Powell (1984), and Jorge Luis Borges (1983). Shelby Foote (1997), David Hackett Fischer (1996), François Furet (1995), Murray Rothbard (1994), Eugene Genovese (1993), Walter Burkert (1992), John Lukacs (1991), Forrest McDonald (1990), Edward O. Wilson (1989), Edward Shils (1988), Josef Pieper (1987), Andrew Lytle (1986), Robert Nisbet (1985), Russell Kirk (1984), and James Burnham (1983) are the previous recipients of the Richard M. Weaver Award.

EPICYCLES:

• Transgendering the Military: Canada has given new meaning to the "feminization" of the military. In September, Canada's Defense Department announced that the military will pay for **sex-change operations** for its soldiers. According to Reuters, Colonel Scott Cameron, director of medical services for the Canadian military, argued that "this is an illness and the treatment is effective." Since Canada's universal health coverage would pay for a sex change for civilians, the military simply conformed to the broader society. There are services, however, that the military won't pay for. "There are some things that these patients sometimes have done cosmetically, like breast implants and so on. We would not pay for that," Cameron said.

• The Rockford Schools Case Continues: **Federalism** is resurgent in Rockford. On September 1, the Rockford School Board informed Federal District Court Magistrate P. Michael Mahoney that they could not afford to fund court-ordered desegregation programs. Since 1991, the programs have been paid for out of the tort fund, a state-mandated tax that municipal bodies levy to pay settlements in civil suits. Late last year, however, Illinois Circuit Court Judge John Rapp ruled that the tort fund could not be used to pay for desegregation. In the past, the federal court has ordered the school board to adopt the tort tax, forcing members to change their votes. The school board's action, however, puts Magistrate Mahoney on notice: forced to choose between complying with a federal court order and a state court ruling, the board will take its stand with the state.

OBITER DICTA: Richard Moore, a poet from Belmont, Massachusetts, has contributed one poem to this issue. Mr. Moore is the author of nine books of poetry, as well as translations of Plautus and Euripides, a book of literary essays, and a novel, *The Investigator*. His most recent book of verse, *Pygmies and Pyramids*, was published by Orchises Press. Mr. Moore gives frequent readings in the Boston area. Our second poet this month is **Harold McCurdy**, the author of eight volumes of verse, including his current collection, *Realizing Westward*.

Our artist this month is **Stephen Schildbach**. He received his Master of Fine Arts in illustration at the Savannah College of Art and Design. He started his illustration career in New York City while working as a graphic designer at a book publishing company. He illustrates magazines, books, and newspapers, and lives in Seattle, Washington.

Snowbirds, take note. *Chronicles* can be found at the following locations in the sunny state of **Florida**: Goerings Book Store, 1310 West University Avenue, Gainesville; Borders, 9205 South Dixie Highway, Miami; World Wide News, 1629 Northeast 163 Street, North Miami Beach; Sarasota News & Books, 1341 Main Street, Sarasota; Books Plus, 485 West Brandon Boulevard, Brandon; and Franklin Street News, 604 West Franklin Street, Tampa.

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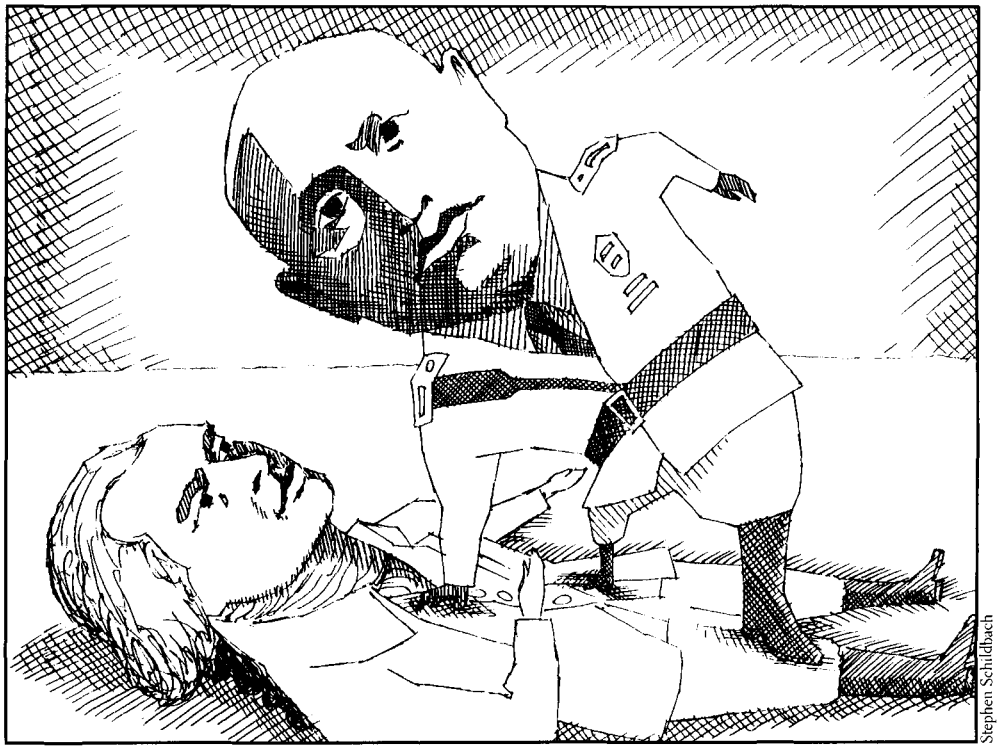

Jefferson or Mussolini?

by Thomas Fleming

The right side of the World Wide Web has been aquiver with reports on Executive Order 13083, otherwise known as Bill Clinton's attempted *coup d'état*. How seriously should we take the Clinton plot to abolish the last vestiges of states' rights? Setting aside the equivocations and dissimulations that mark all of Mr. Clinton's official utterances, one can reduce his executive order on federalism (issued in Birmingham, England, in May) to two points: a very weak restatement of the principle that, under the Constitution of the United States, some powers are reserved to the states; and an aggressive and wide-reaching declaration of the conditions that entail an exception to the Tenth Amendment.

The first two exceptions, which involve interstate relations, are more or less justifiable. The rest are subjective to the point of being capricious. The federal principle is to be suspended when, for example, there is "a need for uniform national standards," when "decentralization increases the costs of government," or when states either have not protected individual rights or have failed to impose regulations from the fear that businesses would relocate. It is hard to conceive of any significant activity of state government that could not be usurped on at least one of these grounds.

Simultaneously with his decree that gives the *coup de grace* to constitutional federalism, the President also issued Executive Order 13084 on Indian Tribal Governments. On the surface, the EO appears to establish "regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Indian tribal governments in the development of regulatory practices on Federal matters that significantly or uniquely affect their communities," etc., etc. In fact, the effect—and purpose—of the order is to circumscribe tribal sovereignties within a ring of federal regulations that will leave them only the name of sovereignty. The penultimate sentence is ominous: "This order shall complement the consultation and waiver provisions in sections 4 and 5 of the Executive order, entitled 'Federalism,' being issued on this day."

Clinton's orders are less alarming and more depressing than they appear at first sight: less alarming because they only confirm a status quo that has been established since the 1960's; and more depressing because it probably does not matter what declarations and ultimatums are issued by the President. Real power is in the hands of a permanent establishment whose brains are in the federal judiciary and whose brawn consists of the tens of thousands of armed federal agents who, on mere suspicion, can raid your home, drive a tank through the walls, fill the rooms with toxic gas, and lay down a line of fire to prevent a few stray survivors from making their escape—all to the applause of congressional cheerleaders like Tom Lantos and Charles Schumer. (With Democrats like Lantos, who needs Nazis?)

If mere words meant anything, then Ronald Reagan's beautiful Executive Order 12612 on federalism would have restored the republic. Reagan's order not only reaffirmed the Tenth Amendment but went so far as to proclaim that "the people of the States created the national government when they delegat-

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ed to it those enumerated powers relating to matters beyond the competence of the individual States." In fact, despite Reagan's best intentions (I think we should grant him that much), the centralization of power proceeded as rapidly in the 1980's as it had in preceding decades.

"True but irrelevant" is the usual response of a sincere American nationalist. As much as he might regret the death of the old republic, the nationalist is a pragmatist who insists upon the recognition of new realities. With a little encouragement, he will go on to explain that this is a diverse nation of over 260 million inhabitants—citizens is no longer a relevant concept—and there is no reason that a people who subdued a continent cannot find a way of adapting their ancient Constitution to changing circumstances. "Even if we wanted to restore the states to their original rights and privileges, we would need all the power of a central state to accomplish the task. The real objective today is the reconstruction of the American nation, and while the interests of efficiency and even of justice might be served by a stricter application of the Tenth Amendment, the various devolutionist movements—whether they are calling for states' rights or outright secession—by dividing the patriotic middle classes against each other, stand in the way of the populist uprising that will overturn the entrenched power of the current ruling class and rebuild Euro-American civilization."

The argument makes a great deal of sense, and if there were any real prospect that Middle American Radicals would escape from the pages of Don Warren's books and lead a peasants' march on Washington, my heart (if not my head) would be with them. Unfortunately, a MARS attack on the federal government is about as likely as the restoration of states' rights or an invasion of bug-eyed aliens from the red planet.

Supposing a populist rebellion did succeed, what sort of America would be restored? Here is the real fly in the imaginary nationalist ointment. States' rights is not simply a part of the American political inheritance: it is the core that has defined us as a nation since 1776, when 13 colonies individually threw off the shackles that bound them to the British Empire. They not only opposed the corrupt regime of 18th-century England, but they also rejected the concept of the modern unitary state (see "Mob Rules," October 1998).

The usual counter-argument—that the incorporation of the "principles of the Declaration" into the Constitution justifies the national government's usurpation of the rights of the states—is the tawdriest sort of propaganda, which is not to say that there is nothing to learn from Mr. Jefferson's "unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America." Consider only the orthography: "States" is capitalized, because they are the sovereign parties to the agreement, while "united" is merely a descriptive adjective. The pattern is repeated in the conclusion, which goes on to spell out the fact that they are "Free and Independent States." Their unity was through the Congress, a body composed of diplomatic representatives of the several states. In November 1777, the specific and limited form of that unity was declared in the Articles of Confederation, whose second article stipulates that "Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled."

In time, some (by no means all) American political leaders came to the conclusion that the Articles had to be modified in the direction of a stronger general government that could act decisively to settle disputes between states and provide a stronger common defense against the infant nation's many enemies, not all of them foreign. It is not easy to determine the exact relationship between the Articles and the Constitution adopted ten years later. In one sense, the Constitution obviously supersedes the Articles, but it is not always easy to understand the provisions of the later document without having some knowledge of the earlier. The Tenth Amendment, for example, is clearly an attempt to declare that the states, in ratifying the Constitution, were not giving up their rights under the Articles except to the extent that certain powers were explicitly delegated to the revised government. Even some of the more general language of the Constitution appears to have been borrowed deliberately from the Articles so as to leave less room for misunderstanding.

James Madison, often called the "father of the Constitution," complained that the general government of the United States was attempting "to enlarge its powers by forced construction of the constitutional charter which defines them," adding that

> indications have appeared of a design to expound certain general phrases . . . so as to destroy the meaning and effect of the particular enumeration which necessarily explains and limits the general phrases; and so as to consolidate the States, by degrees, into one sovereignty, the obvious tendency and inevitable result of which would be to transform the present republican system of the United States into an absolute, or, at best, a mixed monarchy.

In Madison's view, then, republicanism itself depended on the preservation of states' rights, and he opposed the broad construction of general language (in, for example, the preamble) which, he says, could not possibly be misinterpreted because "having been copied from the very limited grant of powers in the former Articles of Confederation, were the less liable to be misconstrued." So, expressions like "common defense" and "general welfare," as they are used in the Constitution, are to be read in the light of the Articles.

Madison's protest against the centralization of power is not a personal expression in a private letter. It is contained in a set of resolutions passed by the Virginia House of Delegates in December 1798. Almost simultaneously, Kentucky passed an even longer and more explicit declaration of states' rights. The gist is given in the first Resolution:

> the several States composing the United States of America are not united on the principle of unlimited submission to their General Government; but that, by a compact under the style and title of a Constitution for the United States . . . they constituted a General Government for special purposes . . . reserving, each State to itself, the residuary mass of right to their own self-government; and that whensoever the General Government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthoritative, void, and of no force; that to this compact each State acceded as a State, and is an integral party, its co-States forming, as to itself, the other party: that the government created by this compact was not made the exclusive or final judge of the extent of the power delegated to itself; since that would have made its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its powers; but that, as in all

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other cases of compact among powers having no common judge, each party has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of infractions as of the mode and measure of redress.

This is the strongest possible statement of what became known as the "compact theory," and in the eighth Resolution, Kentucky laid her cards on the table—and they were all trumps. Arguing that the unauthorized centralization of power "is not for the peace, happiness or prosperity of these States," it is resolved that "where powers are assumed which have not been delegated, a nullification of the act is the rightful remedy. . . . Every state has a natural right . . . to nullify of their own authority all assumptions of power by others within their limits."

The author of the Kentucky Resolutions was not a 16-year-old John C. Calhoun but Madison's political chief and then-mentor, Thomas Jefferson. Madison, in drawing up the resolutions that were moved by John Taylor in the Virginia legislature, was acting in concert with (or, rather, under instructions from) Jefferson, who was working feverishly in this period to prevent the break-up of the federal union. A firm stand on states' rights, he thought, would keep Virginia from bolting.

The Virginians were disgusted with the New England administration of John Adams, which (so they believed) was every day assuming monarchical dimensions, and they were infuriated by the Alien and Sedition Acts, designed to punish the Jeffersonians and their immigrant friends. "But if," wrote Jefferson to John Taylor on June 4, 1798, "on a temporary superiority of the one party, the other is to resolve to a scission of the Union, no federal government can ever exist," because the habit of fissioning, once established, would not cease until North Carolina and Virginia would part company. "A little patience," he concluded, "and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolve, and the people recovering their true sight, restore the government to its true principles."

By 1798, Jefferson had quarreled with his old friend and colleague John Adams, and neither of the men (or their supporters) was capable of being fair to the other. The followers of Vice President Jefferson viewed President Adams as "King John," a priggish and conceited despot in embryo and an enemy to republican government. The misnamed Federalists, on the other hand, red-baited Jefferson and his friends as bloodthirsty Jacobins, already sharpening the blades on their guillotines. There was some truth (though not much) in each side's propaganda. John Adams was something of a prig—how could the descendant of Puritans help it?—and he had grown flat-footed, politically, from standing too much upon ceremony.

Jefferson, on the other hand, was subject to most of the follies of the 18th century. He believed in progress and enlightenment, viewed inherited rank and status as the enemy of humanity, and believed that the purely moral doctrines of Jesus had been perverted by priests and bigots into a system that oppressed the human mind. As a conventional child of the Enlightenment, Jefferson was a platitudinizing leftist with an ability to turn a phrase, an honest Voltaire, a Tom Paine with roots. But Jefferson did have roots in the soil of Virginia, with runners connecting him with the best families in the Old Dominion. It was not his fashionable radicalism or acquaintance with French intellectuals that made Jefferson distinctive, but the lessons he learned as a Virginian. Jefferson the radical is merely an American philosophe; Jefferson the Virginian is the great reactionary of the American political tradition.

Jefferson showed his two sides on virtually every issue, but as he matured, the Virginian slowly overtook the philosophe (a reversal of the Jekyll and Hyde story). In his early days, he spoke windily about the need for a new, more progressive education; he ended up both as a militant apologist for the classical tradition and—as Albert Jay Nock pointed out—as a staunch elitist. The authors of *Who Killed Homer?* are aware that Jefferson's University of Virginia had something like an open curriculum. What they do not know is that UVA required graduates "to be able to read the highest classics in the language with ease, thorough understanding, and just quantity." (Jefferson took a keen interest in Greek and English prosody.)

In his political struggle with Hamilton and his allies, Jefferson came to believe that Hamilton was attempting to reinflict the British system of organized corruption upon the American people. The fulfillment of this ambition required a centralization of power that went beyond the limits laid down in the Constitution: a national bank undergirded by a national debt that would make the government dependent upon the commercial interests who, in turn, would support the government; restrictions on the press that would prevent the emergence of a principled opposition; and a crackdown on foreigners that would quarantine Americans against the French political disease.

In protesting against the Alien and Sedition Acts, the Jeffersonians had to move cautiously, to avoid the impression that they were either opposing the ascendant Federalists for purely political motives or defending traitors and foreign agitators. Madison and Jefferson took their stand on the Constitution's reservation of unenumerated powers to the states and to the people. In the Kentucky Resolutions, Jefferson goes to what seems to be the absurd length of insisting that "alien friends are under the jurisdiction and protection of the laws of the State wherein they are: that no power over them has been delegated to the United States, nor prohibited to the individual States, distinct from their power over citizens."

Even the most entrenched advocates of states' rights would probably concede that immigration and naturalization are matters better left to the general government, but Jefferson's position is far from unworkable. In frontier communities, for example, aliens were often allowed to vote in local elections, on the grounds that they were part of the local—if not of the national—community, and it is not too much of a stretch to imagine a federal republic in which Florida might choose to take in an unlimited supply of Cuban exiles who would not be allowed to enter Georgia. Contrariwise, Florida would have been able to reject both the "Marielitos" expelled by Castro and the Haitians whose highly dubious claims to refugee status were acknowledged by the federal government, much to the disgust of the people of Florida and their governor. The whole immigration debate might be depoliticized if border states were able to import seasonal labor without imposing them as welfare claimants and supposititious citizens on the entire nation.

A state-and-local approach would also defuse the abortion debate, the same-sex marriage crisis, Mormon polygamy, the war on drugs, and the gun issue. Nationalists will always protest, claiming that guns, drugs, and homosexual couples will find their way from one state to another, but Muslims have no difficulty, apparently, in bringing their harems and high explosives into the United States. Fifty separate (but cooperating) jurisdictions would have to do a better job of putting tourniquets on the spreading poison of drugs and automatic weapons than

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the manifestly incompetent and brutal murderers who work for the BATF, the FBI, and other agencies that maintain strict compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

States' rights and federalism, we know, are relics in the museum of dead ideologies; consolidation of power is inevitable and progressive, the wave of the future. But we live in the future, and it does not work. Perhaps it is time to give the sage of Monticello a second chance. He was, after all, no simplistic ideologue on the subject of states' rights. As Dumas Malone points out, Jefferson had acknowledged the need to strengthen the government set up by the Articles; his criticisms of the Constitution "related, not to the reduction in the powers of the states, but to the lack of safeguards for individuals."

In drafting the Kentucky Resolutions, according to Malone, "Jefferson went further in his emphasis on the rights and powers of the states vis-à-vis the general government than he had ever done before or was ever to do again." This is not entirely accurate. The 1798 Resolutions may represent the high-water mark of his defense of states' rights, but that is partly because the nature of the crisis demanded a strong and principled response. In 1800, Jefferson was in office and could hardly regard his own administration as a threat to Virginia, and his Virginia dynasty lasted through three presidencies for 24 years. However, it was only in his later years that Jefferson fully articulated his vision of decentralized political authority, both in his plan for a localized system of state education in Virginia and in his blueprint for a government of wards, outlined in a series of letters written in the last ten years of his life.

In Jefferson's comprehensive vision, each level of government—national, state, local, and neighborhood—would have sufficient autonomy to manage its own affairs. Each ward (corresponding to a township or neighborhood) would be given "those portions of self-government for which they are best qualified, by confiding to them the care of their poor, their roads, police, elections, the nomination of jurors, administration of justice in small cases, elementary exercises of militia." In short, says Jefferson, these wards will become "little republics . . . for all those concerns which, being under their eye, they would better manage than the larger republics of the county or State."

Ultimately, the principle of devolution works its way down even to the household, to "the administration of every man's farm by himself." This principle, if carried out, would serve as a secure foundation of political liberty: "Where every man is a sharer in the direction of his ward-republic . . . and feels that he is a participator in the government of affairs, not merely at an election one day in the year, but everyday . . . he will let the heart be torn out of his body sooner than his power be wrested from him by a Caesar or a Bonaparte."

It hardly needs to be said that would-be Bonapartes and their lackeys are instinctively revolted by Jefferson's vision. Today, he would be called President Moonbeam, because it is a mark of insanity to believe that a government can be anything but corrupt.

What are the inspirations for Mr. Jefferson's vision? His own experience of managing an estate and working with his neighbors must have been at the back of his mind, but Jefferson also had read enough about the history of ancient Greek and Renaissance Italian city-states to know that political liberty and national creativity are always rooted in local attachments. His radically American dream may have drawn its strength from ancient and medieval sources, but despite the constant opposition of national and state governments, America remained a predominantly Jeffersonian nation through the 19th century. Most so-called public schools were owned and operated by communities as small as one of his wards, and the volunteerism that he recommends ("Get them to meet and build a log cabin," he urges Joseph Cabell in describing how a local community can take charge of its own affairs) and that is described by Tocqueville was the spirit that animated the towns and villages that sprang up on the prairies without any "by your leave" from any of the Caesars and Walpoles who had taken up permanent residence on the Potomac.

When honest men ponder the future of the United States, they would do well to consider Jefferson's recommendation that the best defense against dictatorship is the independence of neighborhoods, counties, and states. In a famous pamphlet, Ezra Pound floated the idea of Jefferson and/or Mussolini. As usual, Ol Ez was half right, but whatever good points Mussolini had, he was Caesarist. If that is what the nationalists of left and right desire for their country, I wish they would say so. But for my political leader, I shall take Jefferson without any ifs, ands, or buts. <c

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Superhighway

by Harold McCurdy

There is a road in Congo,
A sandy camel track,
That suffers eighteen-wheelers
To break its asphalt back.

The eighteen-wheelers carrying
Tons of bottled beer
Come up from the port city
Of what was once Zaire.

They cross a roaring river
Past turbines that supply
More electrical power
Than the Congolese can buy.

The turbines have gone rickety
From want of use and parts,
The native roadside markets
Lack customers for their arts.

But still the eighteen-wheelers
Grind northward with their loads
Of imported beer in bottles
While the economy implodes.

I listen to this saga
On NPR, and weep
For the unknown people of Congo
And the absurd high tech they keep.

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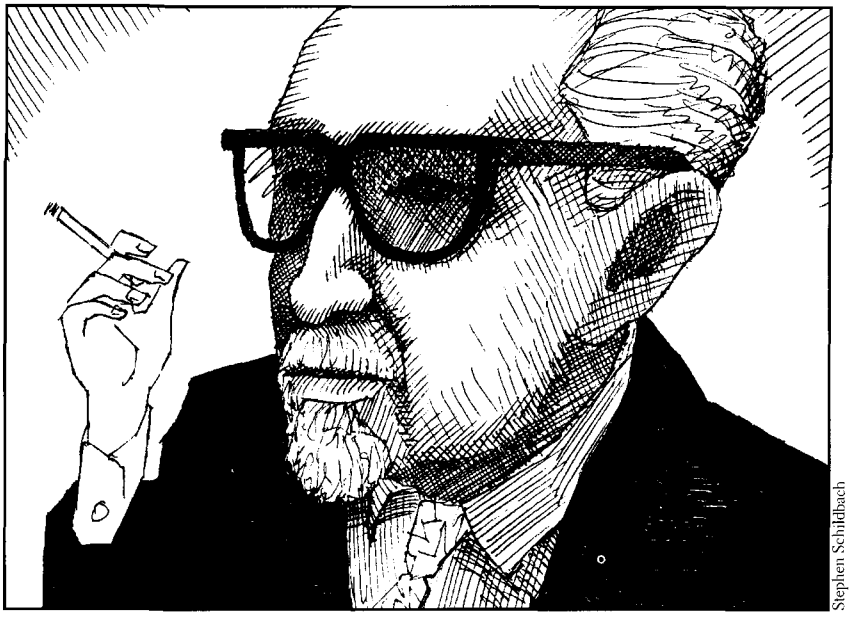
Dwight Macdonald

by John Lukacs



A *Rebel in Defense of Tradition* is the title of Michael Wreszin's 1994 biography of Dwight Macdonald (1906-1982). It is a very good title, by which I mean something more than a "handle"; it is a precise phrase, a summary properly affixed to the memory of an extraordinary man. The emphasis of Wreszin's biography is on Macdonald's politics: but that is not what I wish now to emphasize. My wish is to draw attention to the unjustly forgotten and, yes, often unjustly obscured qualities of this American thinker.

We met in 1953, seven years after I had come to America. *Commonweal* had published a short essay of mine, dealing with literary correspondence. Macdonald wrote a note to the editors of *Commonweal* about something else and went on to say how much he liked my piece "above all." I was elated, because I had read some of his writings by then and I was impressed with their literary and moral—yes, moral—qualities. I called on him in New York. He was living in Greenwich Village, toward the end of his marriage with his attractive first wife, Nancy. Our meeting was not a success. He sat there nervously, moving his large frame jerkily from one side to another, wagging his head, including that impressive forehead and head of hair and the *Henri-quatre* goatee of his. This combination of the Highlands and Greenwich Village, of a Scottish philosopher and Trotsky was there, too, in his diction: his carefully chosen words were pronounced in his high heady voice with occasional queer, lower-New York vowels and consonants. That may have been—I am not sure—an early habit that eventually had become his accustomed self: as in the case of George Orwell (with whom he had many things in common), his clothes, too, were part and parcel of Dwight Macdonald's wish to identify himself with the people—well, with a certain kind of people. I knew that he called himself—and in many ways he indeed was—a freedom-loving anarchist; I tried to impress him with the argument that a true conservative and a true anarchist have much in common, because of their distrust of state power and their dedication to liberty. He was in one of his dour moods; our conversation did not go very far. Yet thereafter we became friends, close friends for a quarter of a century at least.

He visited us two or three times each year, staying for a weekend or for a few days. He loved and esteemed my first wife Helen and my second wife Stephanie. He came down on a dark winter afternoon, a month after Helen had died. As he walked in the door he stopped in the hall: "This house is empty," he said. He loved children; he would talk to my children and tease them for hours.

Our relationship had its ups and downs. The downs were grim, but they did not last. Occasionally our relationship suffered because of his extraordinary thin-skinnedness. Once their car broke down somewhere in Pennsylvania; he rang us up in the middle of the night; I said that I would come and get him

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and Gloria and drive them to a motel. He then hung up. I thought no more about it, until a few days later I got a four-page closely typed letter telling me that our friendship was over and done with, because I had failed to offer them hospitality that night. (Because of the distance it had not occurred to me.) On another occasion he hectored and lectured me savagely because I had complimented a young woman on the attractiveness of her wig: for reasons unfathomable to me he considered that an insult. He believed, as I do, that good manners are not superficialities, that manners have a moral foundation; yet he chose to be offensive and rude on occasion. Still, unlike the celebrated Lady Hester Stanhope about whom Kinglake wrote in *Eothen* that "with all the force and vehemence of her invective, she displayed a sober, patient, and minute attention to the details of vituperation, which contributed to its success a thousand times more than mere violence," Dwight's rudeness was defensive, the unexpected outburst of some kind of suppressed rage. During the last tragic years of his life that rage burst forth more and more often. We now know that his physical illness had then affected his mind. This was especially tragic as he was obviously suffering in more than one way; but also because he was a man of great kindness, with a mental and moral range far wider—and deeper—than that of most intellectuals. You had to know—and listen to—him to understand that. It was there, latent in some of his writings; but then he wrote no books, and he was no public speaker.

A tragic side of his character was his diffidence. Few people saw this. People thought that he was abrasive and arrogant because he was exaggeratedly self-confident. The opposite was true. His self-distrust was deeply hidden, at great and profound variance with his strong, confident, sure-footed opinions—which, however, were as genuine as his self-distrust (another example of the shortcoming of modern psychological theories of "super-ego" and "sublimation").

However, self-distrust and diffidence are not the same as modesty and humility: the latter may serve all kinds of constructive purposes, while the former are often mental obstacles to achievement. To begin with the most obvious example: Dwight never wrote a book. This was not only the result of insufficient self-discipline. It was the result of insufficient self-confidence. He did not think that his writing ability could sustain the effort. He was a brilliant sprinter; a fine middle-distance runner; not a long-distance runner. During that last 15 or 20 years of his life his indiscipline and his diffidence began to feed upon one another. He was—in fits and starts—beginning to work on a book, and on a very important one: his memoirs. I had something to do with that. I urged and implored him during nearly 20 years to do so, because of my belief of the very great importance of such a book. Dwight Macdonald was in the center, or at any rate near the center, of American intellectual life for 50 years. He knew the protagonists; the passing scene; but even more important were his unique and honest powers of observation and insight, and his ability to describe much of this in his inimitable prose. He had already demonstrated his capacity to do that kind of writing in his short-run pieces put together in *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. I have many letters from him about this, as I nagged him to get going. Publishers offered him advances; he did begin the book; but he came nowhere near to more than the draft of a chapter, or perhaps not even that. This was a tragedy, as much for him as for the history of American civilization.

Yet there *are* more than a half-dozen books that he wrote, collections of his essays and articles. Unlike most books of that kind, they are genuine books, uniformly readable and good from end to end, because they are extraordinarily coherent. They are living illustrations of the coherence of his principles and also of his mental vision: scattered small monuments to his greatness as a writer. He knew that the choice of every word was not only an aesthetic but a moral choice: in this sense alone he was an American moralist. Most of his contemporaries did not recognize this particular quality: a few, such different people as Mary McCarthy and Malcolm Muggeridge, did. The fault for the insufficiency of his recognition was due to the pettiness and narrowness and ideological obscurantism of his contemporary intellectuals; but then Dwight contributed to this himself. His occasionally erratic behavior, his unfashionable idiosyncrasies, his skepticism of anything and anybody declared "serious" or "seminal" gave ample evidence to those people who were inclined to think that he was not sufficiently serious, and not sufficiently intellectual.

Opposites attract. He came from an old upper-middle-class Scottish-Protestant American family. He rejected their standards and ideals early, in the 20's, before he himself was 20 (though not them: he dedicated one of his books to his father. He once told me that his father laughed only at good stories, while his mother laughed at none). Knowing and feeling the powers of his mind—and, presumably, of his senses—he was attracted to the New York bohemian and intellectual atmosphere. In many ways he was a genuine intellectual: he enjoyed the ceaseless ideological argumentations and political squabbles among the intelligentsia, especially during the 1930's; they were aware of his mental powers; yet he was plagued, too, by the complications of his character. Like those of every patrician who wants to be a bohemian, and of every aristocrat who wants to be a populist, his personality was complicated. He was flattered and admired and feared on occasion, but once the New York intellectuals found (in the 1960's) that the generating of their own publicity could be very profitable, they no longer took him seriously enough. They thought that he was not One Of Them; he was not quite An Intellectual. (This was true of those on the left as well as of those of the new "right," especially of the neoconservatives, disliked as he was by Irving Howe and hated by Sidney Hook.)

The opposite was true. He was more than An Intellectual; surely more than a New York Intellectual, for at least two reasons. One of these was his strong moral and aesthetic sense. He could detect—and, moreover, identify—the slightest trace of intellectual or stylistic fraudulence from no matter what ideological direction, with the kind of sureness with which a champion tea-taster or wine-taster would pinpoint the most minuscule presence of adulteration, resting on the sustained experience of a lifetime. In addition to the sureness of his moral insight, the very extent of his literary knowledge was phenomenal. He was so much better educated than most of the intellectuals and artists in whose bohemian circles he lived—during the last 20 years of his life, more and more out on the edge of their circles. Few of the latter knew (and know) much about literature before, say, 1880. Their knowledge reaches back to Tolstoy, to Dostoyevsky, perhaps to Matthew Arnold or to George Eliot. Dwight knew English literature from Chaucer and Shakespeare, backward and forward. One of his best sentences is the one with which he ended his review of The New English Bible, in 1962: "Like finding a parking lot where a

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great church once stood." There was this dour, Scots, monumental probity of his mind. But there was that other constant inclination: a revolt against the businessman mentality, seeking a home in the warm fog and smoke of intellectual argle-bargle. He knew—and with every reason—how much he knew, and how reliable his tastes were. He also thought—with very little reason—that he did not have any original ideas (he once told me that). Apart from the condition that there is really no such thing as an Original Idea, he was wholly wrong. He was so good in *describing* things and people and ideas that he ought not have bothered with the task of trying to *define* them. Yet something compelled him at times to move in that direction, even though he agreed with me that to describe is infinitely more important and fruitful than to define, and also that it was there that his unique talents worked best.

He was one of the few American thinkers and writers who escaped the fatal American predicament of reaching the zenith of achievement early, and not developing further afterwards. His writing, and mind, were better in his 40's than in his 30's, he reached his peak in his 50's, and had it not been for the negative condition of his enormous wastefulness he would have gone on and on. He frittered away his great talent on articles and correspondence, often directed to insubstantial and even silly matters. This duality was there in his working habits. On the one hand he was utterly undisciplined, letting things go for hours, days, weeks, and eventually giving them up. On the other hand he took infinite care (and pains) to polish and change and get his prose exactly right; he would stay up all night in his cubbyhole office at the *New Yorker*. In his personal life, too, this duality persisted: he could be dreadfully disorderly, but at the same time extremely and precisely meticulous and demanding about certain manners and human considerations. He was an American gentleman who wanted to be a bohemian; a man of letters who wanted to be an intellectual. These aspirations unraveled him in the long run.

His life falls into clearly distinguishable segments. He was sent to Yale in 1924 where he rebelled against the pedantic consideration of literature taught by William Lyon Phelps; Dwight was an avid reader, a rebel, and a modernist. In the early 1930's he married his first wife, Nancy, who was beautiful, intelligent, and well-to-do. He worked for *Fortune* for a number of years. He was a Trotskyist for a while, having recognized the brutal dishonesties of Stalinist communism years before other intellectuals did. In 1944 he began to write and edit (with Nancy) his own magazine, *Politics*, a journal which was special, individualist, anarchist, flailing the dishonesties of intellectuals mewing for blood during and after the war and the rhetoric of General Patton as well as that of Max Lerner. He was on his way to becoming an American Orwell (Orwell liked his writing), but he was also pulled by the inclination to write like Lytton Strachey . . . well, at least a little. Anyhow, he did not have Orwell's self-discipline. He was associated with *Partisan Review* for about 20 years, but he really did not fit in.

Politics ceased in 1947. Then—fortunately—William Shawn of the *New Yorker* offered him a berth. For the next 15 years or so they paid him (he ended up with a large debt to them) and wrote what I think is some of his best stuff. This stuff did not deal with politics but with culture and literature. His literary pieces were so good that I, at least, thought that he was much better than Edmund Wilson: indeed, had he kept on that path he could have emerged as the greatest American literary critic of all time. But he dribbled his talents away. He divorced Nancy and married his second wife, Gloria, in 1954. Around 1963 began the last chapter of his intellectual life. He moved away from the *New Yorker* and fell back on two of his inclinations which were not fruitful ones. One was the movies—all of his life he took them seriously as an art form (I think that movies, at their best, are good entertainment) and wrote column after column in *Esquire* as its movie critic, with occasional flashes of fire and wit but not very valuable, I fear, in their bulk. The other inclination was his return to radical politics, his participation in rallies, etc., during the Vietnam War. I thought that this immersion into the—falsely "revolutionary"—politics of that opposition was a waste of his time.

During the last ten years of his life he wrote less and less. Yet when he wrote something it was still as good as ever: his last published article (I think), the piece he wrote about Buster Keaton in the *New York Review of Books* in 1980, was Macdonald at his best. But he was ill and dosing himself with the strangest of medicines, and his mind was turning bitter and, as I now know, was badly affected with sclerosis. He had a genuine liking and taste for what was best in this life, the high pleasures of body and mind. He was discriminating, an anti-puritan puritan. But he never knew how to take care of himself, physically or intellectually.

His funeral service took place in a Unitarian church on Lexington Avenue on a gray, cold December day in 1982. The pews were peopled by older people of his generation, people who must have remembered the days when intellectuals in America were a small minority, when the company they kept had marks of a camaraderie, when intellectuals and gentlemen were not yet woefully opposite sensitivities, since both of these were avocations that did not pay. The current power-brokers of American intellectual life and the younger generation of New York Intellectuals were—inconspicuously—absent. c

LIBERAL ARTS

A TERRIBLE BURDEN

"The L.D.S. doctrine of plural marriage became a personal matter for Charles and Annie in 1876, when Charles took a second wife, twenty four-year-old Mary Emma Fowler. . . . This must have been a great trial to both Charles and Annie. Theirs had been a wonderful marriage, and through journal entries and letters it is clear that the two adored each other. To have their tranquil lives interrupted by a plural marriage was difficult to accept."

—*from Bradley W. Richards, M.D.*, The Savage View: Charles Savage, Pioneer Mormon Photographer *(Nevada City, California: Carl Mautz Publishing)*

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The Way of Love

Dorothy Day and the American Right

by Bill Kauffman

The title "Dorothy Day and the American Right" promises a merciful brevity, along the lines of "Commandments We Have Kept" by the Kennedy Brothers. After all, the founder of the Catholic Worker movement and editor of its newspaper lived among the poor, refused to participate in air-raid drills, and preferred Cesar Chavez to Bebe Rebozo.

But there is more to the "right" than a dollar bill stretching from the DuPonts to Ronald Reagan, just as the "left" is something greater than the bureau-building and bomb-dropping of Roosevelts and Kennedys. Maybe, just maybe, Dorothy Day had a home, if partially furnished and seldom occupied, on the American right.

The Catholic reactionary John Lukacs, after attending the lavish 25th anniversary bash for *National Review* in December 1980, held in the Plaza Hotel, hellward of the Catholic Worker House on Mott Street, wrote:

> During the introduction of the celebrities a shower of applause greeted Henry Kissinger. I was sufficiently irritated to ejaculate a fairly loud Boo! . . . A day or so before that evening Dorothy Day had died. She was the founder and saintly heroine of the Catholic Worker movement. During that glamorous evening I thought: who was a truer conservative, Dorothy Day or Henry Kissinger? Surely it was Dorothy Day, whose respect for what was old and valid, whose dedication to the plain decencies and duties of human life rested on the traditions of two millennia of Christianity, and who was a radical only in the truthful sense of attempting to get to the roots of the human predicament. Despite its pro-Catholic tendency, and despite its commendable custom of commemorating the passing of worthy people even when some of these did not belong to the conservatives, *National Review* paid neither respect nor attention to the passing of Dorothy Day, while around the same time it published a respectful R.I.P. column in honor of Oswald Mosley, the onetime leader of the British Fascist Party.

National Review, dreadnought of postwar American conservatism, occasionally aimed its scattershot at Day. Founder William F. Buckley, Jr., referred casually to "the grotesqueries that go into making up the Catholic Worker movement"; of Miss Day, he chided "the slovenly, reckless, intellectually chaotic, anti-Catholic doctrines of this good-hearted woman—who, did she have her way in shaping national policy, would test the promise of Christ Himself, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against us."

The grotesqueries he does not bother to itemize; nor does Buckley—whose only memorable witticism was *Mater, Si, Magistra, No*—explain just what was "anti-Catholic" about a woman who told a friend, "The hierarchy permits a priest to say Mass in our chapel. They have given us the most precious thing of all—the Blessed Sacrament. If the Chancery ordered me to stop publishing *The Catholic Worker* tomorrow, I would."

If Buckley and Kissinger were the sum of the American right, mine would be a very brief article indeed. But there is another

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Bill Kauffman is the author, most recently, of With Good Intentions? *(Praeger). This article is derived from a speech given at the Dorothy Day Centenary Conference at Marquette University in October 1997.*

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American right—or is it a left, for praise be the ambidextrous—in which Miss Day fits quite nicely. Indeed, I think she is more at home with these people than she ever was with Manhattan socialists. They are the Agrarians, the Distributists, the heirs to the Jeffersonian tradition. The keener of them—particularly the Catholics—understood their kinship with Day. Allen Tate, the Southern man of letters and contributor to the 1930 Southern Agrarian manifesto, *I'll Take My Stand*, wrote his fellow Dixie poet Donald Davidson in 1936:

> I also enclose a copy of a remarkable monthly paper, *The Catholic Worker*. The editor, Dorothy Day, has been here, and is greatly excited by our whole program. Just three months ago she discovered *I'll Take My Stand*, and has been commenting on it editorially. She is ready to hammer away in behalf of the new book. Listen to this: *The Catholic Worker* now has a paid circulation of 100,000! [Tate neglects to say that the price is a penny a copy] . . . She offers her entire mailing list to Houghton-Mifflin; I've just written to Linscott about it. Miss Day may come by Nashville with us if the conference falls next weekend. She has been speaking all over the country in Catholic schools and colleges. A very remarkable woman. Terrific energy, much practical sense, and a fanatical devotion to the cause of the land!

The program that so excited Miss Day was summarized in the statement of principles drawn up at the Nashville meeting of Southern Agrarians and Distributists. Mocked as reactionary for their unwillingness to accept bigness as an inevitable condition, the conferees declared (*inter alia*):

> —The condition of individual freedom and security is the wide distribution of active ownership of land and productive property.
> —Population should be decentralized as well as ownership.
> —Agriculture should be given its rightful recognition as the prime factor in a secure culture.

Though Day was absent from Nashville, she was to speak the language of the Southern Agrarians, without the drawl, many times over the years. "To Christ—To the Land!" Day exclaimed in the January 1936 issue. "*The Catholic Worker* is opposed to the wage system but not for the same reason that the Communist is. We are opposed to it, because the more wage earners there are the less owners there are . . . how will they become owners if they do not get back to the land."

Widespread ownership was the basic tenet of the Agrarians' Catholic cousins, the Distributists. The *Catholic Worker* published all the major Distributists of the age, among them Chesterton and Belloc, Vincent McNabb, Father Luigi Liguti, and the Jesuit John C. Rawe (a Nebraska-born "Catholic version of William Jennings Bryan"). On numberless occasions Dorothy Day called herself a Distributist. Thus her gripe with the New Deal: "*Security* for the worker, not ownership," was its false promise; she despaired in 1945 that "Catholics throughout the country are again accepting 'the lesser of two evils'. . . . They fail to see the body of Catholic social teaching of such men as Fr. Vincent McNabb, G.K. Chesterton, Belloc, Eric Gill and other distributists . . . and lose all sight of *The Little Way*."

Dorothy Day kept to the little way, and that is why we honor her. She understood that if small is not always beautiful, at least it is always human.

The Catholic Worker position on economics was expressed quite clearly:

> [W]e favor the establishment of a Distributist economy wherein those who have a vocation to the land will work on the farms surrounding the village and those who have other vocations will work in the village itself. In this way we will have a decentralized economy which will dispense with the State as we know it today and will be federationist in character. . . . We believe in worker ownership of the means of production and distribution as distinguished from nationalization. This to be accomplished by decentralized co-operatives and the elimination of a distinct employer class.

The American name for this is Jeffersonianism, and the failure of Distributism to attract much of a stateside following outside of those Mencken derided as "typewriter agrarians" owes in part to its Chesterbellocian tincture. "Gothic Catholicism" never could play in Peoria.

Nor could it stand upon the Republican platform. Garry Wills recalls this exchange during his first visit with William F. Buckley, Jr.: "'Are you a conservative, then?' [Buckley asked.] I answered that I did not know. Are Distributists conservative? 'Philip Burnham tells me they are not.' It was an exchange with the seeds of much later misunderstanding."

Were the Distributists conservative? Was Day conservative? Depends. Herbert Agar, the Kentucky Agrarian and movement theorist, wrote in the *American Review* (April 1934), "For seventy years, a 'conservative' has meant a supporter of Big Business, of the politics of plutocracy," yet "the root of a real conservative policy for the United States must be redistribution of property." Ownership—whether of land, a crossroads store, a machine shop—must be made "the normal thing."

"Property is proper to man," insisted Dorothy Day, though she and the Distributists—and much of the old American right—meant by property something rather more substantial than paper shares in a Rockefellerian octopus. "Ownership *and* control are property," declared Allen Tate, making a distinction between a family farm—or family firm—and a joint-stock corporation, the artificial spawn of the state.

Like Tate and the Southern Agrarians, Day was no collectivist, eager to herd the fellaheen onto manury unromantic Blithedales. "The Communists," she said, sought to build "a sense of the sacredness and holiness and the dignity of the machine and of work, in order to content the proletariat with their propertyless state." So why, she asked, "do we talk of fighting communism, which we are supposed to oppose because it does away with private property. We have done that very well ourselves in this country." The solution: "We must emphasize the holiness of *work*, and we must emphasize the sacramental quality of *property* too." ("An anti-religious agrarian is a contradiction in terms," according to Donald Davidson.)

Day described the Catholic Worker program as being "for ownership by the workers of the means of production, the abolition of the assembly line, decentralized factories, the restoration of crafts and the ownership of property," and these were to be achieved by libertarian means, through the repeal of state-

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granted privileges and a flowering of old-fashioned American voluntarism.

During the heyday of modern American liberalism, the 1930's, when Big Brother supposedly wore his friendliest phiz, Day and the Catholic Workers said No. They bore a certain resemblance to those old progressives (retroprogressives)—Senators Burton K. Wheeler, Gerald Nye, and Hiram Johnson—who turned against FDR for what they saw as the bureaucratic, militaristic, centralizing thrust of his New Deal. The antithetical tendencies of the *Catholic Worker* and the 30's American left were juxtaposed in the November 1936 issue of the *Catholic Worker*. Under the heading "Catholic Worker Opposition to Projected Farm-Labor Party," the box read:

> Farm-Labor Party stands for:
> Progress
> Industrialism
> Machine
> Caesarism (bureaucracy)
> Socialism
> Organizations.
>
> Catholic Worker stands for:
> Tradition
> Ruralism
> Handicrafts
> Personalism
> Communitarianism
> Organisms.

And never the twain shall meet.

An anarchistic distrust of the state, even in its putatively benevolent role as giver of alms, pervaded the Catholic Workers, as it did the 1930's right. But then as the late Karl Hess, onetime Barry Goldwater speechwriter turned Wobbly homesteader, wrote, the American right had been "individualistic, isolationist, decentralist—even anarchistic," until the Cold War reconciled conservatives to the leviathan state.

The 1930's dissenters—the old-fashioned liberals now maligned as conservatives; the unreconstructed libertarians; the cornbelt radicals—proposed cooperatives and revitalized village economies as the alternative to government welfare. The Catholic Workers agreed. The holy fool Peter Maurin, Day's French peasant comrade, asserted that "he who is a pensioner of the state is a slave of the state." Day, in her memoir *The Long Loneliness*, complained,

> The state had entered to solve [unemployment] by dole and work relief, by setting up so many bureaus that we were swamped with initials. . . . Labor was aiding in the creation of the Welfare State, the Servile State, instead of aiming for the ownership of the means of production and acceptance of the responsibility that it entailed.

"Bigness itself in organization precludes real liberty," wrote Henry Clay Evans, Jr., in the *American Review*, a Distributist journal. The home—the family—was the right size for most undertakings. And so the home must be made productive once more. In the April 1945 *Catholic Worker*, Janet Kalven of the Graiiville Agricultural School for Women in Loveland, Ohio, called for "an education that will give young women a vision of the family as the vital cell of the social organism, and that will inspire them with the great ambitions of being queens in the home." By which she did not mean a sequacious helpmeet to the Man of the House, picking up his dirty underwear and serving him Budweisers during commercials, but rather a partner in the management of a "small, diversified family farm," who is skilled in everything "from bread-making to bee-keeping." For "the homestead is on a human scale"—the only scale that can really measure a person's weight.

The Agrarians and Distributists dreamed of a (voluntary, of course) dispersion of the population, and Day, despite her residence in what most decentralists regarded then and now as the locus of evil, agreed: "If the city is the occasion of sin, as Father Vincent McNabb points out, should not families, men and women, begin to aim at an exodus, a new migration, a going out from Egypt with its flesh pots?" asked Day in September 1946. This revulsion against urbanism seems odd in a woman whose base was Manhattan, symbol of congestion, of concentration, of cosmopolitanism rampant. Yet she wrote of the fumes from cars stinging her eyes as she walked to Mass, of the "prison-gray walls" and parking lots of broken glass. "We only know that it is not human to live in a city of ten million. It is not only not human, it is not possible." The Southern Agrarians would not demur.

World War II destroyed agrarianism as an active force in American intellectual life—just as it fortified the urban citadels of power and money. Foes of America's involvement in the war, heirs to the non-interventionist legacy of George Washington, were slandered, most notably Charles Lindbergh, whom the *Catholic Worker* defended against the smears of the White House.

Despite Day's disavowal of the "isolationist" label, the *Catholic Worker* of 1939-1941 spoke the diction of the American anti-war movement, which, because it was anti-FDR, was deemed "right-wing." Sentences like "We should like to know in just what measure the British Foreign Office is dictating the foreign policy of the United States!" could have come straight from the pages of Colonel McCormick's *Chicago Tribune*. So could the objection to the "*English and Communist Propaganda*" of the New York papers, and the reverence toward the traditional "neutrality of the United States" and the keeping of "our country aloof from the European war."

"*The Catholic Worker* does not adhere to an isolationist policy," editorialized the paper in February 1939, though in fact its position, and often its phraseology, was within the American isolationist grain. The editorial sought to distinguish the paper from the bogeymen "isolationists" by urging "that the doors of the United States be thrown open to all political and religious refugees"—a position also taken by many isolationists, for instance H.L. Mencken, who wanted our country to be a haven for the persecuted Jews of Europe.

Day and the Workers dug in for a tooth-and-nail fight against conscription—"the most important issue of these times," as they saw it. Day replied to those who noted that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to register with the census that "it was not so that St. Joseph could be drafted into the Roman Army, and so that the Blessed Mother could put the Holy Child into a day nursery and go to work in an ammunition plant."

Or as Peter Maurin put it:

> The child does not belong to the state;
> it belongs to the parents.

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The child was given by God to the parents;
he was not given by God to the state.

This was by now a quaintly reactionary notion. What were children if not apprentice soldiers? Like their isolationist allies, the Catholic Workers suffered years of "decline, suspicion, and hatred" during the Good War. Circulation of the *Catholic Worker* plummeted from 190,000 in May 1938 to 50,500 in November 1944. By 1944, only nine of 32 Houses of Hospitality were operating.

The Cold War transmogrified the American right: anti-communism became its warping doctrine, yet a remnant of cantankerous, libertarian, largely Midwestern isolationists held on, though the invigorating air of the 1930's, when left and right might talk, ally, even merge, was long gone. The fault lies on both sides.

The unwillingness of the *Catholic Worker*'s editors to explore avenues of cooperation with the Old Right led them, at times, to misrepresent the sole popular anti-militarist force of the late 1940's. In denouncing the North Atlantic Treaty which created NATO, the *Catholic Worker* claimed that "the only serious opposition in the Senate is from a group of the old isolationist school, and their argument is that it costs too much." This is flatly untrue—the isolationist case was far more sophisticated and powerful, and it rested on the same hatred of war and aggression that underlay the Catholic Workers—but to have been honest and fair would have placed the Catholic Worker on Elm Street and Oak Street, whose denizens might have taught the boys in the Bowery a thing or two.

Postwar Catholic isolationists would be condescended to as parochial morons by the Cold War liberal likes of James O'Gara, managing editor of *Commonweal*, who snickered at those mossbacks who refused to recognize that "American power is a fact" and that "modern science has devoured distance and made neighbors of us all." What good is personalism in a world of atomic bombs? What mattered the small? Father John C. Rawe's experimental school of rural knowledge, Omar Farm, near Omaha, was shattered when all but two of its students were drafted to fight World War II. Liberal Catholics continued to support the conscription against which pacifists and right-wingers railed, although, as Patricia McNeal has written of the League of Nations debate, "the majority of American Catholics supported the popular movement towards isolationism and rejected any idea of collective security." But the League aside, we all know which side won. The state side. The liberals who do not know us but, as they so unctuously assure us, have our best interests at heart.

"The greatest enemy of the church today is the state," Dorothy Day told a Catholic audience in 1975, sounding much like the libertarian right that was her natural, if too little visited, kin.

The powerful libertarian strain in the *Catholic Worker* was simply not present in other postwar magazines of the "left," excepting *Politics*, edited by Day admirer Dwight Macdonald. American liberals had made peace with—had made sacrifices to—Moloch on the Potomac. As *Catholic Worker* editor Robert Ludlow argued in 1951,

> we are headed in this country towards a totalitarianism every bit as dangerous towards freedom as the other more forthright forms. We have our secret police, our thought control agencies, our overpowering bureaucracy. . . . The American State, like every other State, is governed by those who have a compulsion to power, to centralization, to the preservation of their gains. And it is the liberals—*The New Leader, New Republic, Commonweal* variety—who have delivered the opiate necessary for the acceptance of this tyranny among "progressive" people. It is the fallacy of attempting social reform through the State, which builds up the power of the State to where it controls all avenues of life.

To which the *New Republic*-style liberals replied: welcome to the real world.

The inevitable Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in *The Vital Center* (1949), his manifesto of Cold War liberalism, wrote, "One can dally with the distributist dream of decentralization," but "you cannot flee from science and technology into a quietist dreamworld. The state and the factory are inexorable: bad men will run them if good abdicate the job."

Alas, most on the "right" crawled into the devitalizing center. A dispersion of property, a restoration of ownership, the reclaiming of the land, a foreign policy of peace and non-interference: these were the dreams of losers, of fleers from reality, of shirkers of responsibility, of—most damningly—*amateurs*. Non-experts. In 1966, in the just-as-inevitable *National Review*, Anthony T. Bouscaren mocked Day and other "Catholic Peaceniks" because, "sinfully, their analysis of the situation [in Vietnam] goes directly counter to that of the distinguished list of academicians . . . who support U.S. defense of South Vietnam." Grounds for excommunication, surely.

In all this worry about the other side of the world, few partisans bothered to notice the dirt under their feet. Distributism

LIBERAL ARTS

FUNDING THE NEW WORLD ORDER

"Intrastate conflicts are today's deadliest political disasters. At the end of history's bloodiest century nearly all nations are at peace with each other, but many are at war with themselves. . . .

"At a time when the tolerance of diversity among states has never been greater, intolerance of diversity within them has rarely been more virulent. A defining dilemma for 21st-century statecraft looms: can the international community find ways to limit the abuse of power within states without triggering new abuses of the power of intervention and aggression in relations between states? The World Bank has an important supporting role to play in helping resolve this dilemma."

—*from John Stremlau and Francisco R. Sagasti,* Preventing Deadly Conflict: Does the World Bank Have a Role? *(Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1998)*

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was dead. Or was it? For in 1956, long after the Agrarian dream had been purged from the American right, supplanted by the Cold War nightmare, Dorothy Day insisted that "distributism is not dead." It cannot "be buried, because distributism is a system conformable to the needs of man and his nature."

Conforming to their decentralist principles—and presaging a later strategy of "right-wing" tax resisters—the Workers refused payment of federal taxes, though as Day wrote, we "file with our state capital, pay a small fee, and give an account of monies received and how they were spent. We always comply with this state regulation because it is local-regional," and "because we are decentralists (in addition to being pacifists)." This resistance, she explained, was

> much in line with common sense and with the original American ideal, that governments should never do what small bodies can accomplish: unions, credit unions, cooperatives, St. Vincent de Paul Societies. Peter Maurin's anarchism was on one level based on this principle of subsidiarity, and on a higher level on that scene at the Last Supper where Christ washed the feet of His Apostles. He came to serve, to show the new Way, the way of the powerless. In the face of Empire, the Way of Love.

How beautiful: in the face of Empire, the Way of Love.

It is only in the local, the personal, that one can see Christ. A mob, no matter how praiseworthy its cause, is still a mob, said Day, paraphrasing Eugene Debs, and she explained, in Thoreauvian language, her dedication to the little way:

> Why localism? . . . [F]or some of us anything else is extravagant; it's unreal; it's not a life we want to live. There are plenty of others who want that life, living in corridors of power, influence, money, making big decisions that affect big numbers of people. We don't have to follow those people, though; they have more would-be servants—slaves, I sometimes think—than they know what to do with.
>
> We don't happen to believe that Washington, D.C., is the moral capital of America. . . . If you want to know the kind of politics we seek, you can go to your history books and read about the early years of this country. We would like to see more small communities organizing themselves, people talking with people, people *caring* for people . . . we believe we are doing what our Founding Fathers came here to do, to worship God in the communities they settled. They were farmers. They were craftspeople. They took care of each other. They prayed to God, and they thanked Him for showing them the way—to America! A lot of people ask me about the influence on our [Catholic] Worker movement, and they are right to mention the French and the Russian and English writers, the philosophers and novelists. But some of us are just plain Americans whose ancestors were working people and who belonged to small-town or rural communities or neighborhoods in cities. We saw more and more of that community spirit disappear, and we mourned its passing, and here we are, trying to find it again.

Dorothy Day found it. Not on the left, and not on the right, but in that place where Love resides. In the face of Empire, the Way of Love. ©

New Freedoms

by Richard Moore

New freedoms, which we lose
in ever new taboos,
I wish you, now so ample,
were fewer. For example,

climbing through careless tresses
and sexy minidresses,
that woman's on the move.
Her beauty's in her groove.

Men, climbed on, feel the tension it
inflicts but dare not mention it,
for that would show malignity
and impugn women's dignity.

O, it's a nasty, scurvy
world, gone so topsy-turvy.
Pray God such urges leave me
soon. All they do is grieve me.

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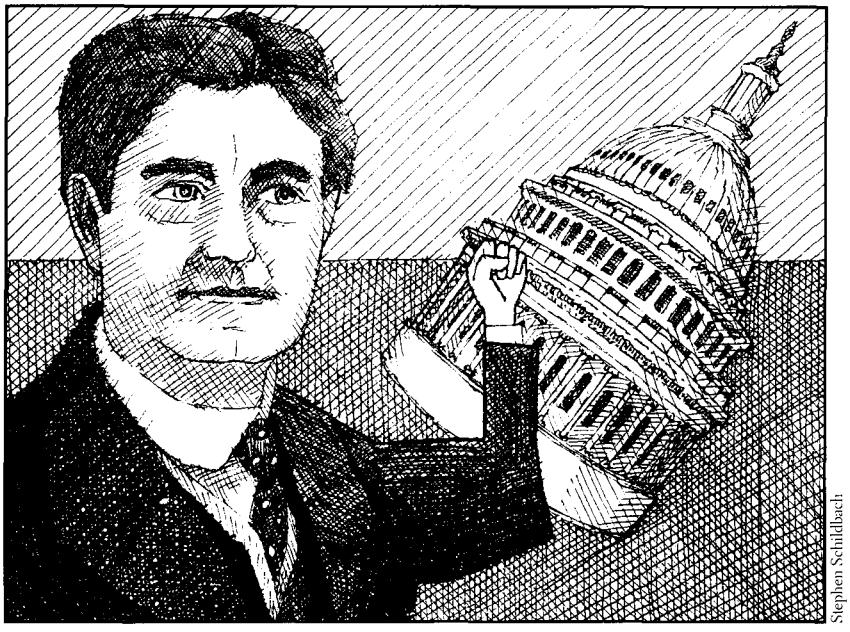
The Lion of Idaho

William E. Borah and the Progressives

by Justin Raimondo



Stephen Schildbach

The latest fad among leftist historians, according to the *New York Times*, is the study of the conservative movement. "By marrying social and political history," the *Times* announced, "this new wave of scholarship is revising the history of Americans on the right"—a prospect that is at once depressing and potentially rather promising.

The depressing part is that the title of the *Times* piece, "Leftist Scholars Look Right At Last, And Find A History," is the exact opposite of the truth. For the sad fact is that, with a very few outstanding exceptions, these are the *only* people who have ever shown the slightest interest in this subject.

Leftist interest in the history of the right dates back to the post-war fulminations of Theodor Adorno, the Marxist sociologist whose book, *The Authoritarian Personality*, "scientifically" proved that all opposition to Roosevelt II was not just wrong but pathological. This theme was readily taken up by the liberals of the 1950's. Daniel Bell, in his anthology *The Radical Right*, and Richard Hofstadter, in *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, added their own twist to Adorno's psycho-smear by characterizing rightist dissent as evidence of "status resentment" on the part of the hoi polloi against the rising managerial class. During the late 50's and throughout the 60's, the tireless team of Arnold Forster and Benjamin Epstein, and a host of others, churned out dozens of "Fright on the Right" books, and a genre was born, thick with such lurid titles as *Apostles of Discord*, *Prophets of Deceit*, *Danger on the Right*, *The Troublemakers*, *The Yahoos*, *The Strange Tactics of Extremism*—you get the idea.

Of the standard works in the field of "conservative studies," few venture further back than 1945. Clinton Rossiter's *Conservatism in America: The Thankless Persuasion* does not even mention the America First Committee, organized by conservative opponents of FDR's drive to war and the biggest right-wing movement in American history. George H. Nash's *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945* is similarly silent on the subject. The hidden history of the Old Right has so far been recognized by only a handful of historians, notably Wayne S. Cole, Justus Doenecke, and Paul Gottfried.

The *Times* finds it "puzzling" that "more conservative scholars themselves haven't mined this history." Yet it is not at all puzzling. John Judis (William F. Buckley, Jr.'s biographer) and Bill Rusher (in *The Rise of the Right*) would have us believe that before the advent of *National Review* there was only Darkness and Old Night. Constrained by ideology from acknowledging that the right was once solidly anti-imperialist, the conservative establishment and its right-wing social democratic allies are deeply invested in maintaining this myth.

Today's academic leftists are bound by no such constraints. These young scholars are eager, says the *Times*, to write a "pots and pans history" of the American right, "which looks at the everyday lives of ordinary people, from young organizers to activist housewives, from religious-minded business entrepreneurs to isolationists." Any inquiry into isolationism, properly understood, will break the embargo on research into the pre-war right, and uncover its populist and progressive Republican roots. As Cole has shown, particularly in *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-45*, looking for the roots of the Old Right means digging in the rich soil of the populist-progressive movement. In doing so, historians will discover how these critics of capitalism, industrialism, and the market evolved into a populist libertarian opposition to the New Deal.

The progressive Republicans in Congress were a diverse lot who nonetheless shared a regionalist, ruralist outlook, in contrast to the cosmopolitan internationalism of the cities. They

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Justin Raimondo writes from San Francisco.

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championed the small businessman and the farmer against the depredations of the railroads and Eastern bankers; stood for the democracy embodied in popular referenda, party primaries, and the direct election of senators against the inherent elitism of party politics; jealously guarded the constitutional legacy of the Founders; and fought against forging entangling alliances abroad. They were the last Jeffersonians, whose insight into the workings of the new "planned capitalism" was perceptively expressed by the man Cole describes as "one of the most impressive, scholarly, and powerful of the Western progressives," Senator William E. Borah of Idaho: "The concentration of wealth always leads, and has always led, to the concentration of political power. Monopoly and bureaucracy are twin whelps from the same kennel."

Borah was the kind of senator that Jesse Helms pretends to be. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee starting in 1907, and until the ascension of FDR, he was the ever-vigilant guardian of American sovereignty, the intractable nationalist whose stentorian voice and oratorical eloquence were mighty weapons wielded to great effect against every scheme to drag us into the intrigues of Europe, from the League of Nations to the Lend-Lease Act. The "Lion of Idaho"—so-called by the *Kansas City Star* because "when Borah starts, it's just like a lion getting out on a circus ground, everybody hunts a high pole and holds their breath until they hear they got him back again"—was the exemplar of the Midwestern populist-progressive spirit in its purest and fiercest form.

Borah was a farm boy from Illinois who went West, took up the law, and, in 1887, wound up in Idaho, where he gained fame for prosecuting syndicalist labor leader "Big Bill" Haywood for the murder of the state's former governor. The trial, and the fact that it was a fair one, devoid of red-baiting, gave him a national stage. Active in Republican politics, he was an insurgent from the beginning, allying himself with the "Free Silver" wing of the GOP. He soon returned to the regular Republican fold, "free silver" having died as a campaign issue, and was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1906 on a platform of direct election of senators, government ownership of railroads, restrictions on the trusts, tariff protection for agricultural products, and free trade in manufactured goods. Inveighing against the marriage of capital and state, Borah and his fellow progressive Republicans formed a regional bloc that continually attacked the predatory monopolism of the Eastern "interests." This placed him in direct opposition to the powerful head of the Senate Finance Committee, Nelson W. Aldrich, leader of the Old Guard Republicans and father-in-law of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Aldrich did not immediately realize this. When Old Guard Republicans questioned the choice committee assignments of the freshman senator from Idaho, Aldrich is said to have remarked, "Oh, he's all right," and pointed out that "he is the attorney for seven different corporations." But when the Senate Committee on Education and Labor began introducing legislation to improve working conditions for railroad workers and investigating the 12-hour day and seven-day workweek in the iron and steel industries, Aldrich contacted Borah's Idaho clients. Borah confronted Aldrich in the Senate corridor: "Why didn't you come to me direct?"

"I thought my plan was the better one," Aldrich replied.

"To save you the trouble hereafter," Borah said, "I will tell you that I severed all relations with corporation law practice when I was elected to the Senate."

"That was a pity," observed Aldrich.

As financial titans fought an economic war that pitted the rising Rockefeller interests against the House of Morgan, Borah and the progressives responded by launching a "fight for the preservation of the little man, of the small, independent producer and manufacturer, as a fight for a sound, wholesome, economic national life," as Borah put it. The progressive cause, he averred, is "a fight for clean politics and for free government."

When that old bugaboo of the prairie populists, the Money Trust, unleashed its drive to establish a banking cartel, and the first legislation creating the Federal Reserve was introduced by Aldrich and his allies in the guise of banking "reform," Borah denounced the scheme: "Not satisfied with giving over to private interest . . . monopoly of currency and credits, it gives them the astonishing privilege to say how much [currency] we shall have or not have." Borah realized that the whole panoply of "reforms" pushed through Congress—antitrust legislation, the creation of the Federal Trade Commission, etc.—were just fig leafs for the continuation of monopolism. "Enacting a law which says that unfair competition is unlawful" while leaving vague "just what does constitute unfair competition" aroused his suspicions. "This strait-jacket" of regulation, he warned, "will be far more embarrassing to small competitive firms" than to "great combinations." In a trenchant analysis that sums up the aims and origin of business regulation in this era, Borah remarked that "most of the fellows who should have been jailed" under the Sherman Antitrust Act "turned reformers and went into politics."

Borah's initial clashes with President Wilson were over the possibility of southward expansion. Mexican democratic reformer Francisco Madero was overthrown and assassinated by the *caudillo* Victoriano Huerta. Wilson demanded that Huerta hold democratic elections and absent himself from the running. The President, averred Borah, had "announced a policy the inevitable logic of which was war with Mexico." Borah's own ingrained nationalism led him to understand how Mexicans could only resent such meddling: Mexico must be left to work out its own salvation. Wilson had denied that the United States was embarked on a policy of continental domination, but "that is what we said while taking New Mexico, California, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines." If the American flag "ever went up in Mexico it would never come down." Not only that, he prophesied, the United States would not stop until it had absorbed everything north of the Panama Canal. As American troops intervened in Nicaragua, Haiti, and Santo Domingo, and made good on the investments of New York banks, Borah lamented that the Monroe Doctrine had become an "instrumentality of imperial aggression." In taking on the burden of empire, we would cast aside forever the cultural homogeneity that was the bedrock of our republican institutions. If we took foreign peoples under our wing, it would be impermissible to treat them as subjects—and dangerous to admit them to the Union. The Mexicans, Borah observed, had no more idea of representative government "than I have of the technical value of Beethoven's music."

While turmoil across the Rio Grande claimed Borah's attention, war clouds were gathering on the other side of the Atlantic. When the *Lusitania* went down, he declared that this in no way compared with "the act of hunting out, robbing, assaulting and murdering American citizens," which had become commonplace in Mexico. American citizens who insist-

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ed on the "right" to travel on the armed ships of belligerents should proceed at their own risk; and yet, the rights of neutrals must be protected. Although Robert LaFollette, Sr., his fellow progressive, fought against Wilson's request for a declaration of war and delivered a four-hour peroration against the President on the Senate floor, Borah voted a reluctant yes, filled with foreboding: "I join no crusade; I seek or accept no alliance; I obligate this Government to no other power." He often said that of all the votes he ever cast in the Senate, this is the one he regretted most. He fought Wilson's war-time suspension of civil liberties, the anti-German witch hunt, the infamous Espionage Act, the closing down of newspapers, police raids against suspected "subversives," and vocally abhorred conscription: "I am unwilling to Prussianize this country in order to de-Prussianize Germany."

The war transformed Borah—or completed a metamorphosis already in progress—just as it transfigured an entire generation of American liberals from witless internationalists to embittered critics of the "merchants of death." Borah denounced the Treaty of Versailles because it meant that the United States would be pledged to defend the status quo in Europe and around the world. The secret treaties of the victorious Allies turned what had been sold as the emancipation of Europe into a reenactment of the Congress of Vienna. Once again, the map was carved up by the imperial powers. The dream of our youth had been sacrificed on the altar of European intrigues.

To Borah, American imperialism was the policy of various "interests." He exposed the role of these "interests" in planning gunboat diplomacy in Latin America, fought to end America's intervention in Russia, and excoriated our European allies for defaulting on their war debts. Franco-American friendship would endure, he thought, but the French "had spent too much time in contemplating that part of the Lord's prayer which read forgive us our debts." This did not endear him to the French, whose sobriquet for the Idaho isolationist was "Dog Borah." When Clemenceau visited America in November 1922, Borah refused to serve on the greeting committee; in a Senate speech, he charged that the sole theme of Clemenceau's speech to his American hosts was one of "punishment, of vengeance, of anticipated war. We are invited back to the Old Europe, with its secret treaties, its secret diplomacy, its militarism, its imperialism, and it is that policy the American people are asked to furnish their money, their means, and their men to enforce."

As the European vultures feasted amid the ruins of a continent, Borah gave eloquent expression to the disillusion and revulsion of the American people. He was in fine form on the Senate floor, leading the so-called Irreconcilables in their unyielding opposition to Wilson's League of Nations: "If the Savior of mankind would revisit the earth and declare for a League, I would be opposed to it." Borah's great fear was that the "interests," financially and socially linked to British banks and French financiers, sought to yoke us to our faithless Allies by means of a transnational power that would enforce "peace" at gunpoint. These European ingrates would "plunge us into the storm center" of European politics. In Borah's view, the Covenant represented the triumph of British imperial diplomacy: without having to fire a shot, the British would maintain control of their vast empire. Not only that, but the League would in effect reverse the results of the American Revolution: what the colonists had taken from George III, they would relinquish to George V.

As Wilson toured the country in support of the League, Borah dogged his every step, rallying the country against the sell-out of American sovereignty. At the Chicago Coliseum, he strode up and down the stage, thumbs hitched in his armpits, and engaged in a spirited dialogue with the audience: "Do you want a League you can't get out of?"

"No, no," shouted the crowd.

"Is there an American who wants a foreign nation to say when and where the Monroe Doctrine should apply?" Borah asked.

The audience yelled: "*Never*!"

"England has suggested (all England has to do now is to suggest) that we send 100,000 men to Constantinople," he told them.

"Don't let them go," they yelled.

"Yes, they *will* go," Borah said, "but without the consent of the American people."

Barely two years after the armistice, a three-sided arms race had begun involving Japan, Great Britain, and the United States. The stern nationalist who had once gone along with Wilson's "preparedness" campaign was now the Senate's most active disarmament advocate; the arms race was "a crime against humanity," said Borah. War with Japan within a quarter-century was inevitable unless the military build-up was shelved and reversed. We must focus, he insisted, on the defense of the continental United States.

As Europe trembled with the seizures of the coming madness, Borah feared the political and economic impact of a flood of refugees, which would only draw us into the maelstrom of foreign intrigues. At the height of the Depression, with 12 million unemployed, the idea of admitting more immigrants aroused Borah's indignation; it could not be justified "by any theory of patriotism or humanity."

The Crash of 1929 saw Borah arguing fiercely for unemployment relief. Hoover and the Old Guard were appalled: Senator Simeon B. Fess, Republican of Ohio, was so emphatic in his attack on the federal relief bill that his knuckles bled as he pounded home his point that relief would make its recipients dependent on the dole forever. Borah replied that Fess and the Old Guard did not hesitate to vote for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which put big business on the dole, and yet none worried about the effect that this might have on the moral character of millionaires.

Borah and his fellow progressives had fought for many "left-wing" causes: unemployment insurance, better working conditions, the income tax, antitrust laws, and public ownership of utilities. Yet they reacted to the New Deal with varying degrees of outraged horror, instinctively alerted to its revolutionary intent. Borah held his tongue until the threat was acute, then attacked the National Recovery Act as the dictatorship of the trusts, the death knell of the independent businessman, and the end of constitutional government in America. The badly shaken GOP, mesmerized by FDR, was galvanized, and rallied around the first Republican to challenge That Man in the White House.

When FDR openly bid for dictatorship and proposed to pack the Supreme Court, and the New Dealers went around exclaiming that the Constitution represented "the ox-cart system," Borah disdainfully replied that "the ox-cart should and will have a high place at the bar of history." Working with dissident Democrat Burton K. Wheeler, Borah mobilized con-

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gressional opposition to the court-packing scheme and handed the President his first legislative defeat. The New Deal steamroller was stopped dead in its tracks—but a battle was soon brewing on another front.

As the financial and political elites revved-up the war propaganda machine, Borah bitterly observed that the same forces that had dragged us into the first Great War were ineluctably drawing us into a second. British lecturers once again bestrode the country, spreading the propaganda of Anglo-Saxon solidarity. Just as in the Great War, the conflict between the Allies and the Axis powers was a clash of empires, a scramble for colonies and economic concessions, not a crusade for democracy and humanity. He would not be duped again.

As German armies blitzed Poland, the Low Countries, and France, Borah mustered all his resources for the last and greatest fight of his life. The 74-year-old Senator, who was quite ill, manned the battlements as the President launched an assault on the Neutrality Act. In this important legislation, Borah and his fellow "isolationists" had constructed a mighty bulwark against the threat of intervention. By stopping the flow of American arms to the belligerents, the Neutrality Act was designed to insulate the United States from attack, maintain legitimate commercial ties with all parties, deprive American munitions makers of war profits, and prevent us from being drawn into foreign conflicts by the logic of events. This huge obstacle on the road to war was removed only after a long debate, which reached its climax with Borah's speech to the Senate. Passionately reasserting the idealism that had inspired the passage of the Neutrality Act to begin with—the desire to stop the spread of weapons of mass murder—his voice rose, then fell to a whisper as he neared the end of his peroration: we were embarked on a course that could only end in war, but it was not too late to turn back.

Borah's last speech was a denunciation of a proposal by Secretary of the Navy Charles Edison to give the President dictatorial powers over industry in peacetime. While the interventionists pointed with alarm to the alleged threat from abroad, "the most vicious enemies of human liberty, the most dangerous to free institutions are the treacherous foes who seek shelter under the laws and institutions which assure free speech, free press, and personal liberty, and then make use of this shelter to destroy the government which protects them." Edison's proposal embodied all the worst fears of the progressive isolationists and their conservative allies: that we would fight National Socialism in the trenches and embrace it at home.

Borah died in January 1940, before the tragedy had completely unfolded. Yet he was hopeful, even at this late hour. Though the world looked to be marching in lockstep toward a totalitarian future, and liberty was seemingly in ignominious retreat, "the little democracy of Finland," bravely and singlehandedly holding off the Soviet advance, "had demonstrated to the world the falsity of this cowardly lie." Had he lived, his optimism may well have been tempered by the triumph of the forces he had fought all his life and the utter defeat and extinction of the old-style liberals, of which he was one of the last.

Borah's Old Guard Republican enemies considered him a dangerous radical, but his credo was more accurately described by Walter Lippmann in 1936 as "a lineal descendant from the earliest American liberals, an individualist who opposes all concentration of power, political or economic, who is against private privilege and private monopoly, against political bureaucracy and centralized government." He kept a notebook of his favorite quotations, and one entry by Oliver Goldsmith seems to summarize his personality and politics: "Great minds are bravely eccentric; they scorn the beaten track."

Borah's evolution from prairie radical to isolationist reactionary was a measure of change not so much in the man as in the world he confronted: the liberalism of 1906 was deemed reactionary in 1936. In a short time, a whole generation of American liberals found themselves exiled to the other side of the political spectrum—without having changed their own fundamental stance.

This sudden switch in political polarities, a general inversion of the traditional categories of left and right, has occurred three times in our history. Before 1914, liberalism meant opposition to imperialism and war, while conservatives were the sons of Ares; in Borah's last days, liberals were doing the war-mongering, and the right was pushing peace. The Cold War saw yet another shift of foreign policy values, with the right militantly internationalist and the left reinventing isolationism. In the post-Cold War world, it is happening again, as the contents of this magazine make plain. If leftist historians are now engaged in a serious project of "revising" the history of the American right, let them recognize this transformative phenomenon—and its implications for their own "liberal" creed.

LIBERAL ARTS

NO HATE IN THE HAIGHT

While Congress considered expanding federal hate crimes legislation this summer, a Santa Cruz, California, man was charged with a hate crime for defending a friend in the Haight neighborhood of San Francisco. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Victor Palmer, the alleged victim, had accused Charles McDavid of going on a "racist rampage." During a preliminary hearing, however, a friend of McDavid testified that Palmer had attempted to rob her, and that McDavid had intervened. Other witnesses testified that Palmer often stole drugs and money from people on the street. Despite the fact that both police and prosecutors were informed of the robbery attempt, prosecutors decided to press hate crimes charges after the case received media attention. In early August, however, San Francisco Municipal Court Judge Mary Morgan dropped the hate crimes charges after McDavid pled guilty to misdemeanor assault. While handing down her sentence, though, she chided him, "It's not a pretty picture when several people of one race chase people of another race down the street." Although disappointed that the hate crimes charges were dropped, Deputy District Attorney Maria Bee praised the judge: "She gave [McDavid] a substantial sentence for someone with no previous criminal record."

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Experiencing Civilization

by Brian Robertson

"The great difficulty in education is to get experience out of ideas."
—George Santayana

Poetic Knowledge:
The Recovery of Education
by James S. Taylor
Albany: State University of New York Press; 211 pp., $59.50

The Restoration of Christian Culture
by John Senior
Fort Collins, Colorado: Roman Catholic Books; 244 pp., $19.95

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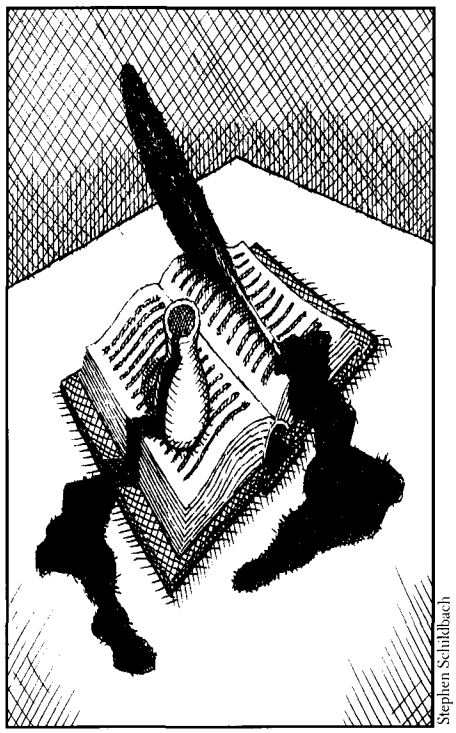
When *The Restoration of Christian Culture* was first published in 1983, the Integrated Humanities Program, founded by John Senior and his fellow University of Kansas professors Dennis B. Quinn and Franklyn C. Nelick, had just had its funding withdrawn by the university's administrators, in spite of having been a minor sensation in more traditionalist academic circles since its founding in 1971. While IHP was known for its unorthodox attempts to transmit the cultural heritage of Christendom to students by means of direct experience rather than bookish study, the burden of Senior's book was that the concept of education by osmosis, in the experiential mode, is hardly "unorthodox." Rather it has a long and dignified tradition dating from the ancients, and it is precisely the loss of that tradition in modern academia that accounts for the sterility of higher education in America. The republication of *The Restoration of Christian Culture* and the release of a new study firmly in the IHP tradition entitled *Poetic Knowledge: The Recovery of Education* by James S. Taylor make this a good time to examine the current state and future prospects of IHP's educational theory.


Stephen Schildbach

While part of transmitting the Western tradition is a matter of education, the project depends largely on the pre-existence of a cultural context promoting an inherent feeling for Western modes of thought and contemplation. *The Restoration of Christian Culture* described a revitalized Christendom and set forth a program for achieving it. Rereading Senior's book today, those in sympathy with his goals should be sobered by the recognition that we are considerably further from his ideal of a Christian culture than we were when the book was first published 15 years ago.

Senior rightly saw the home as the primary transmitter of the traditions, mores, and customs of Christendom. Contrary to this is the passive, ersatz "culture" of mass entertainment, the goal of which is to stimulate the senses and appetites of "cultural consumers" with a prepackaged "product." When this anti-culture predominates, the result is the deadening of the imaginative faculties as well as the destruction of the contemplative sense necessary to all rational human activity. Today, with domestic life weakened further by the continuing flight of married mothers to the workplace, the dominance of the entertainment culture is greater than ever before.

While not a Luddite, Senior sees clearly the inherent destructiveness of technological developments such as television, which militate against the home environment, replacing it with an illusory sense of community and purposeful action. "Technology," he writes, "must be regeared to the proper dimensions of the human good—and not the other way around." Here one finds an echo of Pope John Paul II's repeated insistence that all systems and institutions must have as their end to serve man, who can never be relegated to the status of means to some greater end, be it cultural, intellectual, economic, or technological.

Taylor's book is focused more exclusively on restoring the culture by thoroughly reforming our idea of what constitutes education. Its thesis is that any successful attempt at passing on the cultural heritage of Western Christian civilization in an academic setting must be based on a personal love for, and appreciation of, Western culture by the student himself. While laborious study involving textbooks, footnotes, memorization of facts, and the ability to regurgitate those facts in formal exam settings may be necessary at a certain, more spe-

Brian Robertson writes from Washington, D.C.

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cialized, level of "liberal arts" scholarship, unless those tools of the modern academic method are firmly based on and sustained by the pleasure derived from personal enjoyment, they will fail completely in the aim of transmitting the tradition. "It was never the plan of the IHP," Taylor writes, "to simply teach the books of Western culture, but rather to discover the roots of that culture and give, to the extent possible, the actual experience of that civilization." His book is an impressive attempt at tracing the idea of poetic knowledge in the Western tradition. Along the way, Taylor investigates the reasons for the concept's virtual demise in Western educational theory and considers the prospects for its revival, which do not appear to be promising. Taylor argues persuasively that, the tradition of poetic knowledge having been lost in the post-Cartesian era, what is known as a "liberal arts" education—to the extent that it survives at all—is increasingly regarded as just one specialized field of education among many others: a practical preparation for an academic "career" rather than the essential bedrock underlying Western citizenship and a vital link to a living cultural tradition. As Dennis Quinn observed,

> The humanities have been professionalized and scientized to the point where the ordinary undergraduate with a budding love for poetry or history or art or philosophy finds his affection returned in the form of footnotes, research projects, bibliographies, and scholarly jargon—all the poisonous paraphernalia that murders to dissect.

Taylor's book is most useful for its examination of how the tradition of forming students' minds by communicating "the actual experience of civilization," or "poetic knowledge," has been lost in the theory and practice of education. The experiential mode of teaching was strongly present from the time of the ancient Greeks through the late scholastics, constituting an essential part of the standard curriculum in European schools as late as the Reformation. It was only with Descartes' establishment of the scientific method of systematic doubt as the way to sure knowledge that the classical notion of learning in the "poetic mode" began to be neglected. Since poetic knowledge entails direct experience of real and objective essences outside the mind, and the mind's intuitive identification with those essences, it was attacked for being empirically disprovable, hence invalid. The exaltation of the experiential mode of knowing in the Romantic era proved a short-lived reaction to the hegemony of the scientific mode, while in the modern era John Dewey, more than anyone else, is responsible for the triumph of the systematized and sterile approach to learning that dominates American education today.

Taylor and the school of poetic knowledge he defends seem to be right on the money in their identification of what is wrong with our current system of education and why it achieves such dismal results, particularly in the all-important task of transmitting what remains of our cultural tradition. A large part of the abysmal and demonstrable failure of our schools and universities to capture the attention, imagination, and energy of students today is the remoteness of the subjects they encounter—and the way in which those subjects are taught—from the love of knowledge for its own sake and the enthusiasm that accompanies the thrill of enjoying the beautiful, making study mere drudgery to be borne for the sake of the utilitarian, careerist ends it serves. Unsurprisingly, the reaction of young people, most of whom have no intention of entering into academic life, to such an atmosphere is the determination to escape it as soon as possible and get on with the business of living—an urge directly comparable to the desire to escape the drudgery of sweatshop labor held by their counterparts in a previous age.

While Taylor's conclusions regarding the weaknesses of the modern educational system are sound, some of the anti-modernism inherent in the IHP philosophy he champions is questionable. Contrary to the contentions of Taylor and Senior, the specialization of professional life and technological development does not necessarily preclude the cultivation of a sense of wonder in leisurely contemplation of reality. One could reasonably argue, indeed, that it makes contemplation possible for a greater number of people than ever before in history. And while the conditions of modern life work against the contemplative attitude necessary for learning in the poetic mode, this simply makes the project of restoring that essential aspect of any curriculum more important.

Further, the most promising development of recent times for those who maintain the primary place of poetic knowledge is the rapid growth of homeschooling. In the home, away from the scientific model that permeates our Deweyized, politically correct classrooms, young children can experience the thrill and wonder of discovering our common cultural heritage in the company and under the direction of the persons best situated to devote themselves wholeheartedly to their development.

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Scorched Earth

by Thomas Fleming

Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom
by Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath
New York: The Free Press;
290 pp., $25.00

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The great debate over the humanities curriculum is the one that never took place. What some disgruntled academics call "the traditional curriculum" is really the hopeless hodgepodge that was cobbled together in the period that stretches, roughly speaking, from the end of the Great War to the Vietnam era. The true traditional curriculum (that is, the classical curriculum) had already been destroyed by the great vandals—Harvard's President Eliot (a mediocre chemist) and the disciples of John Dewey—and out of the rubble a sterile and generic humanities curriculum had been patched together by well-intentioned and desperate men (Hutchins in Chicago, Meiklejohn at the University of Wisconsin). It did not work, it could not work, and the only people who mourn its passing are themselves the victims of a dumbed-down system that annually cranks out English Ph.D.'s like so many cheap VCRs: they may have the wiring to show films of Hamlet, but the only videos available are of Brian Di Palma's latest or old Doris Day movies.

Although both Thomas Molnar and Jacques Barzun have had valuable things to say, the last really good book on the collapse of American education was Albert Jay Nock's Page Barbour lectures. For their subtitle alone, the authors of *Who Killed Homer?* deserve our gratitude for reopening the one really important question in higher education, namely, the indispensability of classical education.

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Hanson and Heath begin, appropriately enough, with the sterility of the classics profession, with what Jacques Barzun once called the "scorched earth policy" of the American Philological Association that turned the study of Greek and Latin literature and history into a social science designed, apparently, to stifle any serious interest in what the ancients have to teach us. "Why," they ask, "do few professors of Greek and Latin teach us that our present Western notions of constitutional government, free speech, individual rights, civilian control over the military, separation between religious and political authority, middle-class egalitarianism, private property, and free scientific inquiry are both vital to our present existence and derive from the ancient Greeks?"

In the course of their useful and important book, the authors take up the death of Homer (and Greek literature), the decline of classics, and the useful lessons taught by the ancient Greeks. They are merciless on the faddists who have reduced the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to a *corpus vile* on which they can practice their theories—gay studies, literary theory, psychoanalysis, feminism, and the form-analysis practiced by more traditional scholars. If anything, they do not go far enough and should have reached back a few years to include all the foolish "new criticism" introduced in the 1950's.

On the other hand, proper credit is not given to the contributions made by hard-working pedants who may not engage in the higher criticism or expatiate on the glory that was Greece, but who have cleaned up ancient texts and elucidated them with useful commentary, who have wasted their eyes poring over papyrus scraps and inscriptions, finding useful information that helps us to make historical sense of ancient masterpieces and, in some cases, actually adding to our store of literature. Pedants have given us big pieces of Bacchylides and most of what we know of such lyric poets as Alcaeus and Stesichorus. It is the pedants, by the way, who are most likely (in my experience) to display a genuinely humane appreciation of ancient literature. My own mentor, Douglas Young, was best known for his edition of Theognis, but when he was asked what he was qualified to teach, he answered, "Greek literature from Homer to Nonnus" (about 12 centuries), and he was not exaggerating.

I also recall T.R.S. Broughton, who had spent most of his career cataloguing the magistrates of Republican Rome—"ancient telephone books" as they were referred to dismissively by puny literary critics not fit (in all senses of the word) to carry his books to the library. Broughton was a plodding teacher, at least in his old age when I took a class in Tacitus with him, but outside of class he was unfailingly helpful and curious as a precocious child about any subject from American place-names to the lyrics of W.S. Gilbert.

Hanson and Heath have, nonetheless, drawn up a telling indictment of the profession, but they have also offered a few ground rules for its reconstruction and some practical recommendations on the study of Greek literature. Here they are, perhaps, less successful. Their account of Sophocles' *Antigone*, for example, provides many useful insights into the relevance of the play for modern students, but their search for useful lessons reduces the play to the sort of propaganda that might find its way into the *Book of Virtues*.

The story of the play is quite simple. The sons of Oedipus quarreled over their inheritance, and Polynices was expelled. He returned at the head of an invasion force, and in the course of the battle he and his brother killed each other. The new ruler, Creon (their maternal uncle), forbids the burial of Polynices' corpse, but the boy's sister, Antigone (engaged to be married to Creon's son), is caught in the act of performing a ritual burial and is condemned to death. Creon's son and wife both commit suicide.

It is a rich and complex play that combines politics with religion and contrasts family obligation with human presumption. Here is the authors' summary of the great choral ode on the wonders of man, which addresses some of the play's central themes: "Science, research, and

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the acquisition of knowledge itself are to remain apart from both religious and political authority." I have read, studied, and taught this play many times without ever coming within miles of this conclusion. In fact, the chorus concludes that civilization (the city) can only survive if man "fulfills [or "threads together"—there is a textual problem] the laws of the land (or the earth) and the sworn justice of the gods." Not exactly a manifesto for the ACLU.

One of the really vexing problems of *Antigone* is why a mere slip of a girl should choose to defy her uncle, the ruler, and bury a brother who had, after all, waged war on his own city. Hanson and Heath summarize Creon's abuse of power, in refusing to allow the burial of the dead Polynices, as "the tyranny of the state over the individual, the mindless chauvinism of a male supremacist." Unfortunately, Antigone is not acting as an individual but as the sole surviving heir of a family that has been wiped out. As Mary Lefkowitz has pointed out, Antigone is no feminist, only a faithful sister carrying out a familial duty. This is a subject that has been well elucidated by the pedants that Hanson and Heath seem to slight in their account of their profession. The superficiality of the analysis is all the more to be deplored since Victor Davis Hanson, at least, has made a genuine contribution to our understanding of Greek democracy.

In analyzing critics of higher education, the authors several times make light of conservatives without giving any sign of having read anyone to the right of Roger Kimball or Allan Bloom. Paul Gottfried, Jacob Neusner, and even fellow classicist E. Christian Kopff are simply not on their radar screen. Despite these flaws, *Who Killed Homer?* is an important book. The authors raise the serious questions and do not shrink from offering solutions. They are sure to be attacked (or, what is worse, ignored) by all the right people: union shop literary critics who stigmatize their critique as one of the "premature obituaries for Homer and for classical education, this time promulgated by distinguished APA members who don't like the work that other APA members are doing," and by conservatives who would prefer to rail against multiculturalism without, first, acquiring any culture of their own.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles.

Cry, the Beloved Community

by Paul Gottfried

Someone Else's House: America's Unfinished Struggle for Integration
by Tamar Jacoby
New York: The Free Press;
613 pp., $30.00

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From the rave reviews in the *Wall Street Journal* and other vehicles of low-octane conservatism, it seems that Tamar Jacoby has produced a work for the ages. Like earlier marvels by Dinesh D'Souza, John J. Miller, and Francis Fukuyama, this study was made possible by funds flowing from neocon foundations, a gesture thoughtfully repaid by the recitation of the prescribed historical views. In accordance with the authorized version, we are told that the United States until the 1960's wallowed in racial injustice, but then came the federal government and liberals Martin Luther King, Jr., Bayard Rustin, Hubert Humphrey, and Lyndon Johnson to raise the collective moral consciousness. Though the later civil rights movement aggravated "black rage" and "white racism" (terms revealingly juxtaposed throughout the book), the concept of racial equality expounded by King supposedly holds the key to racial reconciliation. This visionary focus comes through unmistakably in Jacoby's 600-page narrative, tracing American race relations back to the beginning of the century while examining the situation in New York, Detroit, and Atlanta in particular. In this survey of what is depicted as mostly white cruelty to blacks, we are reminded of King's invocation in a speech in 1957 of a multiracial America gathered together in one "beloved community."

Jacoby's idea of two divergent civil rights movements is overstated. Already in the 1960's, King, among other black "integrationists," was calling for stringent racial quotas in both private and public employment and for reparations to be paid to blacks by white Americans. Such concessions were thought to be fully consistent with a "beloved community" that would include a once victimized black race entitled to temporary privilege. And if there were in fact two contradictory civil rights movements, it may be assumed there would be legions of civil rights spokesmen and activists conspicuously leaving a movement which they believed had betrayed their ideals. Defections of this type did take place in the communist and Nazi movements, but, with very few exceptions, they did not occur in American civil rights politics from the 60's onward. Jacoby praises Andrew Young for renewing King's integrationist vision while seeking the Georgia governorship in 1990, and she attributes Young's defeat in the Democratic runoff with the present governor, Zell Miller, to "racial clannishness." But Miller was and remains both an explicit advocate of racial quotas and a critic of the Confederate battle flag, which Jacoby regards as a hate symbol. Not surprisingly, the "integrationist" Young has been equally zealous in embracing both of these positions.

Although Jacoby and her promoters believe that she holds independent opinions about black civil rights issues, it is hard to understand this claim. Despite her widely publicized ties to a self-described libertarian foundation, the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Jacoby has much good to say about LBJ's Great Society. What she does find wrong with this costly and coercive "initiative" is that it did not go far enough: it was "only a beginning of the effort that would be necessary to make integration possible for the poorest black." And while she weakly criticizes affirmative action as "a Band-Aid on the cancer of black underdevelopment," she characteristically proposes her own wish list of remedial policies. An examination of this list in the last chapter proves the obvious, namely, the lack of any striking discrepancy between what Jacoby wants and what public administration is currently doing to solve racial problems. Despite the repeated complaint that the state may have tried too much too soon, it is not clear what Jacoby would have done differently, save to centralize public education more thoroughly in order to avoid the anti-Semitic black nationalism that engulfed predominantly black neighborhood schools in Brooklyn in the late 60's.

One place where Jacoby tips her ideological hand is her commentary on the New York mayoral race of 1973. Here she vividly contrasts the idealistic liberal victor, John V. Lindsay, to his Conserva-

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tive Party opponent, William F. Buckley. Although Lindsay is portrayed as an "impractical" do-gooder and Buckley as a sober realist who knew that "government could not solve all the problems blocking black entry into the mainstream," Jacoby does not hide her true feelings. Lindsay was expressing noble sentiments, though mistaken about specifics and clumsy about applying his ideals. But Buckley ran "a pandering campaign," presumably because his supporters were Catholic ethnics and because he told harsh truths, a point grudgingly conceded by Jacoby, who observes that "not everything that Buckley said about blacks was wrong or racist." The problem with this analysis is that Jacoby comes up with nothing Buckley said that was noticeably wrong; nor does she reveal anything Lindsay said that was strikingly correct. Her judgments are formed on the basis of a highly parochial sensibility. Thus the civil rights movement, we are led to believe, used to be a good thing until it turned against New York Jews and against Israel, at which point it became bad and deserving of contempt. But even then it was only bad in its derailed state, while those who continue to be "idealistic" about a socially engineered multiracial society, at least for the United States, are seen as praiseworthy.

Two of Jacoby's "idealistic" heroes are Albert Shanker and Sandra Feldman, leaders of the American Federation of Teachers, who (we are told) stood tall when black nationalists were allowed to run schools in the Ocean Hill district of Brooklyn in 1968. While the black leadership, whom the New York City Board of Education refused to resist, antagonized the white, predominantly Jewish teachers, one might equally criticize what Jacoby calls the "educational establishment." For more than 30 years, Shanker and his union associates have tried to maintain a public school monopoly of American education run with minimal parental or neighborhood interference. They have raved against the danger of religion influencing American education and have been exemplary supporters of the big-government left. Nonetheless, Jacoby cannot find sufficient praise for Shanker in particular, as an upholder of educational standards in the turmoil of 1968. This "son of Eastern European Jews, raised in poverty in Manhattan's Lower East Side," said "bluntly what no one else dared to say: that the emperor had no clothes—that the activists on the governing board did not represent the district or the civil rights movement, that their vituperative anger would do no good for the city." It is questionable that the board, consisting of public figures and black activists, had no support among blacks; or that their black nationalist ideology would be foreign to the evolving black politics of the time. But, even more, it is hypocritical to cast the noisily vituperative Shanker as the voice of reason. Unlike his black opponents in Ocean Hill, he would be around for years making noise, most of it unseemly and highly partisan.

Like her sponsors and blurbers, Jacoby is a leftist at heart who entertains doubts about the excesses to which her beliefs and policies can be and have been pushed. Only because a credible right has collapsed or been marginalized has Jacoby been able to appear as something she clearly is not, a "conservative," for quibbling over race-based affirmative action and for decrying the anti-Semitism of some black separatists. But arguably her relentlessly integrationist vision may be more dangerous for established communities, white or black, than the toleration of separate racial and ethnic patterns of association. Separate communities do not necessarily hate each other, while groups which have been forced together may come to dislike each other intensely. And to solve the resulting tensions, ever newer "policies" will be inflicted upon an increasingly fragmented society. With due respect to Jacoby, it is absurd to argue that unless we are brought together through her dreams of integration, we shall be choosing "chaos" over "community." For centuries Americans lived in authentic communities, as opposed to governmentally orchestrated ones, without falling into utter darkness.

One recent development that particularly offends Jacoby is a popular Southern sign that says, "We should have picked our own cotton!" Since the sign by implication laments the removal of blacks from Africa and their enslavement in the New World, I was initially puzzled as to why it might anger the author. My own explanation is that—like other liberals and neocons—Jacoby has adopted something like the Catholic concept of the *felix culpa* with regard to race. Mimicking the view presented in the Good Friday service, that the Fall of Adam was partly fortunate for bringing Christ, Jacoby and her ilk rejoice over the enslavement of blacks for leading to a multiracial America. That is the only explanation that seems to fit, given the author's obsessive concern about getting back to the integrationist project which she insists has now stalled.

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, and the author, most recently, of After Liberalism: Mass Democracy in the Managerial State *(Princeton).*

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Genius in the Making

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Becoming Laura Ingalls Wilder: The Woman Behind the Legend
by John E. Miller
Columbia: University of Missouri Press; 320 pp., $29.95

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In 1993 the University of Missouri Press published *The Ghost in the Little House: A Life of Rose Wilder Lane* by William Holtz, who made a small sensation by contending that everything that makes the famous "Little House" books remarkable and memorable was actually the work not of Laura Ingalls Wilder but of her daughter, Rose Lane—the novelist, magazine author, and libertarian pamphleteer—who took what were originally disorganized and amateurish effusions by her mother and reorganized, expanded, rewrote, and polished them to

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create what for nearly 70 years have been recognized as classics of American children's literature. Holtz's claim that Lane functioned as Wilder's ghostwriter made him a minor literary celebrity overnight—especially in his home state of Missouri—but, while some readers enthusiastically accepted his conclusions, others (including long-standing Wilder scholars like William T. Anderson) demurred. Five years later, the same press has published a full-fledged rebuttal to Holtz's work, in the form of a biography of Mrs. Wilder by John E. Miller, a professor of history at South Dakota State University at Brookings and author of *Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House: Where History and Literature Meet.* While the central aim of Miller's book is to delineate the personal and artistic development that transformed a pioneer girl and Missouri matron best known for her success at raising chickens into an internationally acclaimed author, a secondary agendum is the refutation of the overweening claims of *The Ghost in the Little House* in favor of what was—until William Holtz came along—the obvious.

Miller's work is competent and interesting; a well-researched, well-written, and sensible book. A major obstacle to Wilder studies has always been Laura's neglect in retaining letters and other useful documents, but Miller has done his best to fill the gaps in the record—frequently resorting to Rose Lane's letters and journals. The early chapters lay out the historical narrative serving as backdrop with which what Miller insists on calling the "novels"—in spite of the fact that a considerable portion of his biographical information derives from the "fictional" account of Mrs. Wilder's life they provide—may be compared. The rest of the book attempts, plausibly and with considerable success, the delicate and difficult task of accounting for the making of a genius. Genius is perhaps the most egalitarian term in the English language, all geniuses, however different, being equal, and Laura Ingalls Wilder was one, her taste for Zane Grey and Luke Short novels notwithstanding. ("People probably wonder why this is my type of reading, but they are easy to hold, and I just enjoy them.") The essence of genius is simplicity, elevating it to the status of a miracle which by definition can never be adequately explained or accounted for. To the extent that explanation is possible John Miller has done an excellent job, from scanty resources.

William Holtz's task, given his exaggerated claim, was to demonstrate how Rose Wilder Lane, whose own novels are at best pedestrian and today almost unreadable, managed to "ghost" eight others exhibiting such warm humanity, deep insight, narrative and dramatic power, and poetic luminosity. He failed at this, as almost anyone not subject to his own peculiar *idée fixe* could have told he must. Holtz, it seems fair to say, was blinded by an uncritical affection for Rose Wilder Lane and a dislike of her mother, Laura Ingalls Wilder. Rose and Laura's relationship was one of love-hate, or love-resentment, not uncommon between mothers and daughters—strong mothers and strong daughters, in particular. Holtz, like Miller, understood that, in the case of Wilder and Lane, the tension arose from a power conflict, the desire on the part of each woman to control the other. "[My mother] made me so miserable when I was a child that I've never got over it," Rose, an only child, wrote. "I'm morbid. I'm all nerves. I know I should be more robust. I shouldn't let her torture me this way, and always gain her own ends, through implications that she hardly knows she's using. But I can't help it."

Unlike Miller, Holtz accepted this self-pitying view at face value. Actually, Rose was a not very talented bitch and neurotic who by her own admission was also a "monster," incapable of normal human affection. Since an attractive personality has little or nothing to do with creative genius (except, usually, in an inverse way), one may ask what the subject has to do with the authorship of the Little House. The answer, of course, is, "Nothing," except for Mr. Holtz's attempt at making it everything—the mainspring of his misguided and foolish literary theory. Miller, like Bill Anderson, Rosa Ann Moore, and Caroline Fraser before him, has surveyed the same evidence available to Holtz and arrived at conclusions quite different from his. Skeptics considering *The Ghost in the Little House* wondered at the time why Mr. Holtz had not considered the possibility of intermediate drafts between Laura's famous holographs, handwritten on lined yellow tablets, and the final typescripts prepared by Rose for the publisher. It appears now that these in-between drafts really are crucial to an accurate evaluation of their collaboration—assuming common sense requires sophisticated literary detective work to confirm the books' authorship.

Miller's own investigations reveal that

> *Little House in the Big Woods* and *These Happy Golden Years* [the first and last volumes in the series] received the lightest editing from Rose; *The Long Winter* and *Little Town on the Prairie* probably were edited the most. Significantly, Rose spent less than a week on the first book. The first pages that Wilder wrote, and other large sections of the book, stand largely intact, indicating that from the start she possessed a talent for narrative description. What is most surprising in considering the work that Rose did on her mother's manuscripts is not that she had to do so much to get them into shape but that she had to do so little.

He concludes:

> Her daughter's hand in encouraging her [mother] and collaborating with her on the preparation of [the] manuscripts was demonstrably crucial to the success of the books. Ultimately, the genius of the novels lay in their author's powers of perception as a girl, in her detached insight into human nature including her own, and in her ability as a mature woman to sift the memories of her childhood through a dramatic lens that chose what was illuminating and interesting to people and discarded what was dull and uninspiring.

Laura Ingalls Wilder was already in her 60's when she began to write the novelistic memoirs that made her famous; she was not quite 44 when, invited to speak on chicken-raising, she wrote out her speech to be read at an agricultural meeting attended by, among others, the editor of the *Missouri Ruralist.*

In between she persevered in her long literary apprenticeship, certain of the powers she discerned within herself and determined, as she put it, "to try to do some writing that will count." She got the job done, of course, and the great virtue of John Miller's book is to help us to see how she did that.

Chilton Williamson, Jr., is the senior editor for books at Chronicles.

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Georgics on My Mind

by R.S. Gwynn

A Timbered Choir: The Sabbath Poems, 1979-1997
by Wendell Berry
Washington: Counterpoint;
216 pp., $22.00

The Deed of Gift
by Timothy Murphy
Ashland, Oregon: Story Line Press;
110 pp., $12.95

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"Farmer-poet" is one of those hyphenated epithets that summons up a vision, and for most readers of American poetry that vision is embodied by Robert Frost, who, the legend has it, turned out memorable poems in spare moments stolen from apple-picking, wall-mending, and woods-stopping. But Frost, despite his undeniable poetic stature, was never much more than a *symbolic* farmer, to borrow a phrase from his biographer, William Pritchard; his unsuccessful venture as a poultryman was mercifully cut short by an inheritance that allowed him to go to England, publish his first two books there, and return home in triumph to spend the larger portion of his days as a university poet-in-residence. As great as Frost's poems about farming are (and the list is long), one gets the impression that the literal drama of farm life interested him less than its inexhaustible stores of metaphor by which he might extend and universalize the farmer's experiences.

With Frost, the hyphen between farmer and poet should be an arrow pointing toward the latter, and his case is typical: How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm after they've seen the *Paris Review*? Farming brings with it such potential for heartbreak that it strikes me as odd that, while novelists like Cather and Steinbeck have explored its capacity for tragedy, only rarely in our poetry have the four horsemen of drought, disease, flood, and freeze made an appearance. Henry Mahan, a talented poet I knew in graduate school who never, to my knowledge, published a collection of verse, once wrote a poem titled "The Chicken Farmer's Vision of Doom":

> Dead chickens ain't no good
> to eat.
> No chickens hatch from rotten
> eggs.
> My shoes are rotting off my feet.
> My feet are rotting off my legs.

Years ago I thought that witty, surreal, and preposterous, but as I drove from Beaumont to Austin recently during our unrelenting Texas drought and saw field after field of parched, withered corn, Mahan's quatrain came back to me with utter seriousness. Every blasted acre represents yet another farmer's dream deferred, if not killed outright. How many prayers, in this year of El Niño, have been offered for what nature can so abundantly provide or withhold? And what poet has given voice to those prayers?

Wendell Berry has. The poems in *A Timbered Choir* originated as "Sabbath poems," meditations written over two decades. Sunday walks provide the occasions, and the appropriate themes of hard-earned rest and hopes of renewal surface on virtually every page. At times, Berry describes a stewardship of the earth that is rewarded with only an overwhelming sense of fatigue. In one poem he reminds us that "As grist is ground to meal / The grinders are ground down"; in another,

> I climb up through the field
> That my long labor has kept clear.
> Projects, plans unfulfilled
> Waylay and snatch at me like
> briars,
> For there is no rest here
> Where ceaseless effort seems to
> be required,
> Yet fails, and spirit tires
> With flesh, because failure
> And weariness are sure
> In all that mortal wishing has
> inspired.

If it were always thus, one might protest that the woods are indeed too "lovely, dark and deep" to resist and that the farmer-poet—"promises to keep" be damned—is justified in burrowing into a snowbank. But Berry, while he never lets us forget the weight of his quotidian chores, is equally a poet of praise. His mood is most elevated by signs of seasonal advent. In one poem he stands beside "a ragged half-dead wild plum / in bloom, its perfume / a moment enclosing me." Even if the old tree, like the rest of us for that matter, has few long-term prospects, it still causes the poet to "recognize as a friend / the great impertinence of beauty / that comes even to the dying."

Berry's reputation as a social thinker so far precedes him that it is at times difficult to separate the poet from the polemicist. While many of the poems display sure craft (the larger portion of them are metrical and rhymed) and coherent content, one is left with the impression of having read a lot of *poetry* but only a few *poems*. At Berry's weakest moments, his language is flat ("Where ceaseless effort seems to be required") and his lines are indistinguishable from prose:

> It is the destruction of the world
> in our lives that drives us
> half insane, and more than half.
> To destroy that which we were
> given
> in trust: how will we bear it?

But at his best, in a wonderfully direct 13-page poem called "The Farm," he underscores what every farmer knows but few have articulated: of all those who labor for the sake of permanence, the farmer stands most tenuously on the land he works. The earth always stands ready to cover over the faint marks of a lifetime's toil. As Berry puts it,

> And so you make the farm
> That must be daily made
> And yearly made, or it
> Will not exist.

Those who are most attracted to *A Timbered Choir*, I suspect, will come to Berry out of reverence for the high seriousness of his message and their attractions to the Christian austerity of his lifestyle; these poems will make few converts, but they will preach eloquently to the choir.

Timothy Murphy may, like Berry, have a trusty ax to grind, but he is determined to sharpen it deliberately, with each stroke of the whetstone corresponding to an individual line, stanza, or poem—a care that is attested to by his waiting until his fifth decade to publish a full-length collection. Murphy studied with Robert Penn Warren, and he seems to have taken to heart the Old Agrarian's lessons about the virtues of memorization: the poems, which are for the most

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part brief, tightly formal, and ironic, cry out for recitation. "Twice Cursed" opens the book:

> Bristling with fallen trees
> and choked with broken ice
> the river threatens the house.
> I'll wind up planting rice
> if the spring rains don't cease.
> What ancestral curse
> prompts me to farm and worse,
> convert my woes to verse?

Richard Wilbur's generous introduction characterizes Murphy's most typical voice as that of "a Dakota farmer who knows everything about outrageous extremes of weather, crop failure, and the many adversities which can lead to falling-down barns and ghost towns." But this lugubrious list of catastrophes does not necessarily result in songs in the key of Dirge. Wilbur says, rightly I think, that in converting "woes to verse" Murphy emerges with "the jauntiness of a survivor, and the high morale of a man who has a purchase on reality, however bleak."

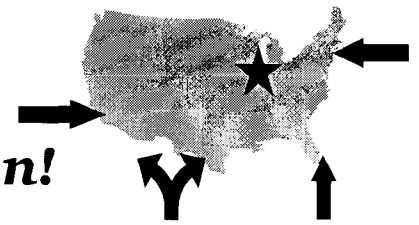
Murphy strikes me as a remarkably original poet, one whose unique sound and vision fly in the face of so much conventional wisdom about what present-day American poetry is supposed to be. To be sure, his subjects are resolutely contemporary; along with the poems about farming are others exploring subjects as diverse as sailing, homoeroticism, hunting, other poets (Wilbur and A.D. Hope are the recipients of two thoughtful homages), art, purebred Labrador pups (in Scots dialect!), and Li Po. Still, Murphy's poetry goes so against the grain of what is usually praised (and overpraised) in contemporary practice that one is almost forced to re-educate himself to appreciate the triumphs here. His short meters force the reader to hear the rhymes in a way that many contemporary formalists go out of their way to avoid; he gives us a poetry that looks back, with no regrets for the legacies of Modernism, to Hardy and Housman in both technique and philosophy. The latter, who appreciated equally the classics and lightfoot lads, must somewhere be smiling in approval at "Memo to Theognis":

> No man is happy
> unless he loves
> smooth-hooved horses,
> hunting dogs and boys.
>
> Happy with boys,
> horses and dogs?
> No man enjoys
> a boy's esteem for long.
> Horses go to the dogs,
> and dogs die young.

I do not know how many contemporary readers, whose palates have seemingly been conditioned to prefer an unmellowed whine to vintage wine, will fully savor the delights of this auspicious debut, but I, for one, hope that this poet will get the hearing he deserves.

R.S. Gwynn is a professor of English at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

Only You Can Halt the Silent Invasion!



America is now experiencing the greatest wave of immigration in its history. Three Presidential Commissions have warned that unless the trend is slowed it will have the gravest consequences for the future of America. Their warnings have been ignored. Why?

Why do the multinational corporations want America to tear down its borders?

How can a country of 270 million people have a "labor shortage"?

Why is America importing millions of the world's poor when we already have 36 million Americans in poverty?

How has excessive immigration depressed wage rates and job opportunities for America's poor?

What is the impact of today's unprecedented immigration levels on education, crime and taxes?

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by Samuel Francis

Inside History's Dustbin

Ever since I committed the blunder, nearly 30 years ago, of signing up with the "conservative movement" during my first year in graduate school, a certain pattern of behavior has enforced itself on my decreasingly callow mind. The pattern, as a colleague of mine once remarked to me, is that there seems to be no other purpose of any conservative organization than to ignite a faction-fight as soon as possible and thereby destroy the organization. In graduate school the rule proved true. There was no campus chapter of Young Americans for Freedom because the leaders of that group had already fallen upon each other and dispatched the rest of the Yaffies to oblivion. The year I joined the only remaining conservative group on the campus, the Young Republicans, the ex-Yaffies decided to attack it and soon managed to leave it a shattered vessel lurching helplessly through the dark seas of the academic left. The child is father to the man, and what I observed as a mere stripling conservative back then has turned out to be something close to a law of the universe ever since. The "right," whatever its philosophical content and whatever its political agenda, appears to be inherently flawed by tendencies to schisms and factionalism, and these tendencies go far to explain why it always loses, no matter how compelling its ideas or how repulsive its political and cultural enemies on the left.

The conservative organizations that prevailed in the 1960's and 70's—like YAF itself—are now largely defunct or mere shells of what they used to be, and not a few destroyed themselves by their own internal factionalism. Today, there is virtually no "conservative movement" worthy of the name, apart from the ever-thriving hive of neoconservative Beltway *condottieri* whose simulation of "populism" keeps their kids in private schools and high-priced cars. Even these quarters are not exempt from the law of conservative self-destruction, and most of them periodically titillate the Beltway rumor mill with stories of their own internal purges, bloodlettings, bankruptcies, and the odd embezzlement by one or another of the patriotic Christians who run them.

No one should be surprised that the Beltway right behaves pretty much like most other people in Washington, but the inherent factionalism of the right is not confined to it, nor is it a product of serious philosophical and political antagonisms. On what may be called either the "Hard Right" or the "Old Right," I can think of perhaps half a dozen organizations that simply cannot work with each other because of the personal loathing, jealousy, and distrust that prevails between their leaders or members. But despite some ideological differences, these groups are all in essential agreement with each other, and all of them have the same enemies. If they could work together, they might actually accomplish something, but they can't, and every effort among them to coordinate and cooperate has flopped. If the truth be told, there is very little practical purpose in anyone joining or aligning with any of them, let alone expecting them ever to accomplish any substantial goal other than remaining in useless existence. Signing up with the American right today resembles nothing so much as picking up a loaded revolver and proceeding to shoot your own toes off one by one.

There are various explanations of the suicidal proclivities of the right, not least the theory that conservatism as it emerged in the 1950's was largely dominated by ex-communists of one stripe or another who insisted on importing into their new-found political allegiances the same demand for conformity and orthodoxy that had prevailed in the Party (whichever "Party," Stalinist, Trotskyist, or other, they had belonged to). The most notorious of these ex-communist grand inquisitors of the right was perhaps the late Frank S. Meyer, a Communist Party functionary until 1945 who, once he had concluded that path was the wrong road to travel, at once set himself up as the chap who got to decide who was and who was not a "real" conservative. From the foundation of *National Review* in 1956 until his death in 1972, Meyer never failed to denounce, purge, read out, expel, and generally behave like the Andrei Vishinsky of the American right. He tried to prevent the late Russell Kirk from writing for *National Review*, spread the rumor that his ex-Trotskyist colleague at the magazine, James Burnham, was a CIA plant, and managed, in his major political-philosophical manifesto (*In Defense of Freedom*), to excommunicate just about every promising mind on the American right of his generation. Admittedly, some of these minds never lived up to their promise, and some lived to break their promises as soon as it was profitable to do so, but Meyer's insistence on an "orthodoxy" or a "mainstream" largely invented and formulated by himself helped make the movement he came to shape as uninteresting as it was unimportant and impart his own doctrinaire habits of mind to the generation of younger conservative activists whom he influenced.

But blaming right-wing self-destructiveness merely on one man is a toad that won't hop. The truth is that the tendency arises from the historical situation of the right in almost every historical context in which any movement of the right appears; it emerges from the fact that the right, almost by definition, is a collection of historical losers.

Probably the first historical conflict in which "right" and "left" were the main contenders was the English Civil War of the 1640's, and while the left side of the conflict, represented by the English Parliamentarians and their myriad "Puritan" allies and supporters, was notoriously schismatic, the same was true of the right, represented by King Charles I and his court. Anglicans versus Catholics, civilians versus military, absolutists versus constitutional monarchists, and the usual baggage of nincompoop courtiers and sycophants versus serious advisors who had some glimmer of how to win and what needed to be done all significantly contributed to the loss of the civil war by the "right" of the day, the eventual execution of the king himself, and the triumph for nearly a dozen years of Oliver Cromwell's dictatorship. Unlike Charles I, Cromwell dealt with his own side's tendencies to factionalism simply by kicking out or ruthlessly suppressing

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those rivals that bothered him.

The left, whether Puritan, Jacobin, Bolshevik, or other, can do that because it generally represents history's winners, a rising social force that actually has an agenda with concrete interests and ideas, and sooner or later the victorious mainstream simply cuts adrift the nuts, crackpots, and perennial malcontents that deflect it from its main purpose. But the right, whatever the historical context, tends to be composed of history's losers—people whose interests, ideas, and values represent a social and political order that is on the wane. If it were not on the wane, there would be no emergence of "right" and "left" at all and hence no significant conflict between them. But precisely because the interests and ideas of the right are declining, it has immense difficulty in coming up with any practical, concrete program by which its obsolescent wishes can be realized, and because it generally represents the losing side of history, it tends to attract folks who are losers in many different respects—conspiracy nuts who worry about the fringe on the flag while the substance of their national sovereignty and civilization is being destroyed; crackpots who have invented their own secret cures for AIDS and cancer; fanatics who have drafted vast, unreadable manuscripts exposing the bankers, the Jews, the Masons, or the Clinton White House as the real cause of everything that's going wrong; and, inevitably, the sad sacks who have no social life whatsoever other than the potato-chip-and-soda-pop *soirées* in which history's discards get to know one another as human beings.

In the United States before 1930, it was not so. The right back then was the organized political expression of a dominant social and political class, a class that sported at its top such families as the DuPonts and at its bottom such happy warriors as Sinclair Lewis's George Babbitt and his friends. It was a class that dictated the tastes and manners of the day, was determined to keep immigrants out of the country, maintain the Constitution and the free enterprise system, put America First, preserve the white, Christian, Republican character of the nation, and crush the Bolsheviks and labor agitators wherever they could find them. As a ruling class, it was an amalgam of the old stock Protestant establishment and the plutocracy that rose to national power after the Civil War. However poorly defined its ideas and vapidly expressed its ethic, it was nevertheless a real class that had something to conserve, and it generally knew that it could not conserve it unless it also conserved the social and cultural fabric through which it exercised social power.

In the Great Depression and New Deal, this bourgeois ruling class was effectively dislodged from social and political power. Its top ranks, if they survived at all, soon allied with the emerging managerial elites in state and corporation, and its bottom ranks, stripped of any real prospect of preserving or restoring the social order in which they had played a significant part, simply drifted. It was mainly those middle and bottom ranks of the old bourgeois elite that for the next 40 years would effectively define "conservatism" and the right as they were known to the generation between Herbert Hoover and Barry Goldwater. Unable to articulate its own ideas and values very effectively, it welcomed ideological allies in journalism and the academy that could express them, but the journalists and the academics were not for the most part of the same class or culture. Hence, the "conservatism" they defined displayed all the symptoms of rootless intellectualism and attracted all the odd and awkward personality types who could not fit anywhere else and would not get along with each other.

Once "conservatism" is decoupled from the social order and the social class that it naturally represents, it becomes simply one more ideological ghetto, angrily hunting down and kicking out those who deviate from its sectarian commandments and every now and then hurling a few mudballs at whoever passes by, and the kinds of personality it attracts are precisely those that are unable to work together for any serious purpose. It ceases to defend authentic tradition because authentic tradition has ceased to exist in a coherent form, and what it defends is "traditionalism." It ceases to defend authentic liberty because the rooted liberty that once prevailed in the defunct social order is no longer meaningful, and what it defends is "libertarianism." It ceases to defend the people, culture, and institutions of the old order because they too have ceased to exist coherently as a fabric or have been conscripted into the new order, and what it defends is simply a pallid ghost of what was once a living civilization. All it can do is worry over who is and who is not a "real conservative," which merely means who does and who does not let the self-appointed swamis of the right do his thinking for him. Depending on the personal strength and success of the particular swamis that lead them, the cults of "movement conservatism" may flourish indefinitely, continue to publish their endless series of unreadable tracts and sermons to their own choirs, and actually meet the payrolls of their staffs, but no one—least of all the swamis in charge—ever expects to gain substantial power or take charge of the rudders of history.

Is there anything that can be done to cure the incessant self-destructiveness of the right or remove the causes of its own suicidal tendencies? Probably not, as long as the "right" insists on defining itself in terms of social and historical forces that have already lost. The only thing it can do is try to grasp the truth that those forces have lost and that what they represented cannot be restored and, instead of presenting itself as the champion of lost causes, to align itself with new forces able to challenge the established order and to do so in terms that will neither be co-opted by the new regime nor be deflected by the phantoms of the old. Once in a while such a movement appears, but invariably it only excites the wrath of the "right." It is too "populist," it appeals to Mass Man, it is too "statist," it is too "radical," or it deviates from the ideological orthodoxy of the right in some other arcane way. Sooner or later, such a movement is either captured by its allies on the right and simply becomes one more phone booth into which all the malcontents and oddwads try to cram themselves, or else it ignores them, wishes them a good day, and proceeds to make a little history all by itself, on its own terms and for its own purposes. But, of course, when the movement does the latter, it ceases to belong to the "right" at all and actually begins to evolve into one of history's winners. ◁

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Letter From England

by Derek Turner

A Valediction for Enoch Powell

◆

Enoch Powell is dead, and it is as if a hill has suddenly vanished from the horizon. British life, conservative life, political philosophy, economic philosophy, classicism, Biblical studies, and learning generally are all the poorer for the death of this English original. Powell was a man of many contradictions—classicist and romantic, patriot and imperialist, politician and moral arbiter, Englishman and Briton, gentleman and populist, soldier and philosopher, public spender and monetarist, man of impulse and man of reflection, introvert and weeper-in-public—who yet represented unchanging truths and steadiness of purpose to his devoted followers. "Enigmatic" was the polite word used by those on the left who hated his views but could not bring themselves to hate the man, but it is a quite useful signification for all that.

J. Enoch Powell was born in Birmingham on June 16, 1912, during a thunderstorm—a suitably Wagnerian beginning to an heroical life. The son of two schoolteachers, he could read by the age of three and was soon nicknamed "the Professor." As a boy he was always reserved, to the point of seeming distant and withdrawn. He was called "scowly Powelly" by his colleagues, although later in life he insisted that he had been just like a normal boy at least some of the time. "I hesitate to recollect the depredations committed [by himself, when a schoolboy] against the rolling stock of the West Midlands Railway," he told a disbelieving television interviewer in 1995.

Showing an early interest in the classics, he won a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was a Fellow between 1934 and 1938. While there he came under the influence of A.E. Housman. Powell always loved Housman's haunting *A Shropshire Lad*, and his own verse was derivative. During the 1930's, he traveled much on the continent, and became increasingly disturbed by the trends in Italy and Germany. His old love of Nietzsche and the militant atheism which it had inspired evaporated, although he retained his love of Wagner. Powell could see that Hitler was bent on war; worse, he thought that the Nazis would win. "I could hear this drumming coming right through the earth," he later recalled. He was always chagrined by not becoming a professor at the age of 24, as Nietzsche had done, but he only missed the record by one year, becoming a professor of Greek at the University of Sydney in 1938.

As soon as war broke out, Powell enlisted as a private, and spent some of the happiest times of his life in the ranks. But his intelligence and linguistic abilities brought him to the attention of the Intelligence Corps, who speedily snatched him and promoted him. He had a dynamic military career, although he never saw any direct action. He coordinated attacks on Rommel's supply lines, helping to ensure British victory at El Alamein. He soon rose to be the youngest brigadier in the army (at 31) and the only brigadier who had ever risen from private. Powell would give his comrades impromptu lectures on Greek and Roman history and culture as they drove through the desert, but he was not always good at practical things. A well-known Powell anecdote is about the tin of sausages that he could not open, and which cut his finger: "Oh the malice—the cursed, diabolical malice of inanimate objects! . . . If they want to be bloody-minded, I'll show them, by God I will," kicking the tin into a bush. Powell's driving was also deservedly infamous, although he always retained his *sang froid*. Once, after driving into a ditch by mistake, he broke the silence after the crash by laughing: "Ha, ha, ha! Never been upset in a gig?" (a reference to an incident in a R.S. Surtees story). In 1943, he was awarded the Member of the British Empire and was posted to India, which he was visiting for the first time. He was captivated by India and instantly busied himself learning Hindi and Urdu. (During a street protest after his famed "Rivers of Blood" speech in 1968, he addressed some of the multiracial rent-a-mob in fluent Urdu, which they found somewhat disconcerting.) He also conceived the idea of being the Viceroy of India, and this ambition was what fired his decision to enter politics.

In 1945, he voted Labour, but he joined the Conservative Research Department in February 1946 after demobilization. He spent several frustrating years being rejected for 19 parliamentary seats before being adopted in the Tory marginal of Wolverhampton South West in 1950, winning by 691 votes. During this time, his views were slowly changing. In 1947, after the announcement of Indian independence, he walked through London all night trying to come to terms with what had occurred, but after arriving in the Commons, he soon began to change his emphasis, from imperialist to patriot. In 1995, he remembered how "I fell head over heels under the spell of the House of Commons. I said this is what I want. The only thing worth having is to be a member of this place and remain a member of this place—it was the incarnation of a nation to me."

He was to be MP for Wolverhampton South West until 1974. Although tipped for rapid promotion, his political career started slowly. His first post was Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, from 1955-57, during which time he helped remove rent controls. His decent record here led to his promotion to Financial Secretary to the Treasury from 1957-58. He resigned from this position over Macmillan's refusal to embrace monetarism. Margaret Thatcher later freely admitted her indebtedness to him. From the backbenches, he continued to raise a principled voice which won wide respect across party lines. In 1959, he famously criticized the conditions at a concentration camp in Kenya, where suspected insurgents were being abominably treated. He helped save the Macmillan government during the 1963 Profumo scandal by publicly declaring his confidence in Macmillan, so widely recognized was Powell's moral probity.

Powell became Minister of Health in 1960, and his three-year reign there was marked by reform and, ironically in the light of his 1958 resignation, plenty of public spending. While Health Minister, he also went along with the existing

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policy of recruiting Caribbean workers for hospitals, for which he came under fire after 1968. An amusing anecdote of his tenure is that when he was visiting a friend, he went to say good night to the friend's young children. He knelt down, picked up a potty from under the bed and smelt it. One of the children asked him why he had done that. "It is my job," he replied.

His views had evolved into unabashed English nationalism, whose symptoms included anti-Americanism, anti-European Economic Community sentiment, and growing reservations about the advisability of permitting large-scale immigration. His romantic view was crystallized in his speech to the Royal Society of St. George in 1961, in which he mentioned how the Athenians, returning to Athens after its sacking by Xerxes, found their sacred olive tree still growing amid the ruins:

> So we today, at the heart of a vanished Empire, amid the fragments of a departed glory, seem to find, like one of her own oak trees, standing and growing, the sap still rising from her ancient roots to meet the spring, England herself . . . from brass and stone, from line and effigy, [our ancestors'] eyes look out at us, and we gaze into them, as if we would win some answer from their silence . . . tell us what it is that binds us together; show us the clue that leads through a thousand years; whisper to us the secret of this charmed life of England, that we in our time may know how to hold it fast.

But in 1968, in Birmingham, Powell made what has become known as his "Rivers of Blood" speech against immigration, and the chorus of outrage has still not died away. We must be "mad, literally mad, as a nation," he said, to permit immigration on this scale. "It is like watching a nation busily heaping up its own funeral pyre. . . . As I look ahead I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, 'I seem to see the river Tiber foaming with much blood.'" He read from the letter of a constituent who had written, "In this country, in 15 or 20 years time, the black man will have the whip hand over the white man" and alluded to the plight of a white pensioner who was "now the only white in her street" and who had had excreta pushed through her letterbox by "picaninnies."

Although it was well received by the crowd, the speech, which had been partly televised, was widely condemned both for its content and its terminology. It was called an "evil speech" by the *Times*, and Tony Benn spoke hyperbolically of "Belsen in 1945." Party leader Ted Heath sacked Powell from his post as Shadow Defence Spokesman without giving him the benefit of the doubt. However, the London dockers and the meat porters of Smithfield Market marched in Powell's support, and within two weeks of the speech, he had received over 120,000 letters of support from the public. "Yet," as Denis Kavanagh wrote in his obituary of Powell in the left-leaning *Independent* on February 9, "the speech that made him also destroyed him . . . the more popular he became the more unacceptable he was to the political elite." Not all that much has changed; our present political elite is at least partly made up of the former students, now broadcasters and sociology professors, who used to disrupt Powell's speeches after 1968, shouting "Disembowel Enoch Powell!" and banging on tables to drown out his voice.

Powell was never allowed to forget that speech. On the one hand, public opinion was very much on his side, and Powell seems to have been instrumental in winning the 1970 election for the Conservatives, as the pro-Tory swing was greatest in his home base of the West Midlands. On the other hand, the clearly immoderate tone of parts of the speech may have given ammunition to those who cared nothing about the nation. Despite some of the terminology, Powell's thoughts on immigration were wise. Who can doubt his 1968 view that "Immigration is the fulcrum by which England is to be overturned"? Who can say in total confidence that Powell was wrong about the black man having "the whip hand over the white man" when one considers how race-based legislation and political correctness are destroying British freedoms? Powell's view on the racial dilemma was sophisticated and even compassionate: "It's not impossible [for a black person to be British] but it is difficult. . . . What's wrong with racism? Racism is the basis of nationality—racism *is* nationality . . . nations are usually based on the self-identification of its members and that's normally due to similarities that we call racial similarities. . . . An Englishman can love India without wishing to see it on the streets of Birmingham."

His relationship with Heath kept deteriorating, as Heath was determined to immerse Britain in the European Economic Community and Powell, now a force to be reckoned with in the party and in the country at large, was equally determined to keep Britain free. Finally, he horrified Conservatives all over the country when he urged voters to choose Labour in 1974, because Labour had promised a referendum on EEC membership. (Labour won, but the 1975 referendum, of course, was lost.) He then switched parties and became Ulster Unionist MP for South Down between 1974 and 1987. He resigned in 1985 over the Anglo-Irish Agreement but was re-elected the following year.

In between all of this, he continued to apply his formidable intellect and gift of expression to many areas, in particular to Shakespeare (he cast doubt on the plays' authorship) and the Bible (he believed that the Gospels had been written by a committee and that Jesus Christ had been stoned rather than crucified). He often traveled alone on the Tube between Westminster and Sloane Square and was always listed in the telephone books. To relax, he went fox-hunting, watched Jacques Tati films, and walked around country churches. Although he usually looked forbidding, Powell was not without fun. Asked if his book on the Gospels was intended for the general reader, he said that it was intended "for the general reader who understands Aramaic and Greek." His old friend, Sir Teddy Taylor, MP, recalled how they had once been locked into a cemetery in Glasgow by mistake, having taken too long to look at some old headstones which had interested Powell:

> We then had to climb over a wall which was about eight feet high, which involved considerable inconvenience and possible danger. However eventually we got over the wall, and Enoch with that delightful smile said to me: "What a wonderful headline that would make, Teddy—'Enoch climbs out from the dead!'"

Powell died in London on February 8. There was controversy even at his funeral. Because he had been a churchwarden at St. Margaret's Church, next to Westminster Abbey, for ten years, his

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body was allowed to "lay in" at the Abbey—a privilege granted regularly to all long-term servants of the church. The (black) Bishop of Croydon, full of Christian charity, said that this privilege should have been withdrawn in Powell's case, arguing that "Enoch Powell gave a certificate of respectability to white racist views which otherwise decent people were ashamed to acknowledge." Some leftists were even more rancorous. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, a writer on race relations, said in the *Guardian*: "I drank a glass of expensive wine to mark the day that Enoch Powell died. . . . I was ecstatic that his brooding presence . . . would no more poison the possibilities that this country now offers all of us, black and white . . . the hatred and paranoia in his flaming eyes were unforgettable." Sneered Norman Shrapnel in the *Guardian*, at once insulting Powell and all the people of England: "Provincialism was of his essence; and English Midland provincialism at that, than which there is no more introverted."

However, even Tony Blair felt compelled to admit: "There was no doubting the strength of his convictions or their sincerity, or his tenacity in pursuing them, regardless of his own political self-interest." Tony Benn, MP, totally opposed to Powell on everything except Europe, spoke warmly of Powell as a "great Parliamentarian." Mourners at the funeral included Sir Dennis Thatcher, John Major, Michael Portillo, Jonathan Aitken, Alan Clark, Viscount Cranborne, Lord Parkinson, Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble, Tony Benn, Sir Hardy Amies, and a representative of the Queen. The service was traditional Anglican, from the opening sentences ("I am the resurrection and the life") to the *Nunc Dimittis* ("Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace"). The address was given by Lord Biffen, formerly Conservative MP John Biffen, and a three-verse extract from Housman's 1896 *A Shropshire Lad* was read: "Loveliest of trees, the cherry now / Is hung with bloom along the bough, / And stands about the woodland ride / Wearing white for Eastertide"—a verse that Powell could never hear without bursting into tears.

Outside the church, Powell partisans gathered to pay their respects. A 76-year-old from Basildon unfurled his St. George's flag and said: "We have to keep our mouths shut but I wanted to send off a great English patriot myself." A red, white, and blue blossomed wreath read "Enoch Powell, you were right. We are now going to the dogs. Ninety percent of people I know say you should have been PM." Later that day, Powell was buried, wearing his brigadier's uniform, in the cemetery of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, in the spot he had selected 13 years before. Sir Patrick Cormack, MP, who gave the address at the funeral service, said that Powell "had the hallmark of the true gentleman—he treated everybody exactly the same."

Said Charles Moore in the *Daily Telegraph*: "Apprehension of the past made Powell's understanding of political events exceptionally deep and exceptionally painful. He suffered among his political contemporaries as a man with perfect pitch suffers among the tone-deaf. He knew so much more than they; he understood so much more; he was simultaneously so much more romantic and so much more rational." Powell's awareness of the decline in British and English fortunes was certainly strong. During an interview he once famously said, "I wish I had been killed in the war," and his eyes filled with tears.

It is very difficult to gauge what effect Powell really had on British life, but he certainly had an enormous effect on a lot of influential people. As he noted in his biography of another Tory maverick, Joseph Chamberlain, all political careers end in failure, and in 1989, he admitted that he might have failed, although it did not mean that he was wrong. By 1995, he was less despondent: "I hear my voice coming through in what is said." Long and loud may it continue to do just that, and long may we listen to this voice of the intrinsic England.

Derek Turner is the editor of Right Now!, *published in London.*

LIBERAL ARTS

THE HOPE OF NATIONS

"In every corner of the world—in every village and city and community—the United Nations is a living testimony of hope. The United Nations lives in the heart and mind of every citizen striving to end violence and promote tolerance; advance development and ensure equality; protect human rights and alleviate poverty. The United Nations, at its best, enables the achievement of those highest of human aspirations."

—*from* The Quotable Kofi Annan *(New York: United Nations, 1998)*

Letter From Brussels

by Tomislav Sunic

The Maastricht Mystique

◆

Even an expert must be mystified by the legal structures of the European Union Parliament and the European Commission. The EU Parliament has roughly 620 deputies, elected every five years from 15 Western European states. Voters from EU countries have no decision over the election of other countries' deputies to the EU Parliament. The president of the EU Parliament is elected every six months—enough to jumpstart his rapid wheelchair on the way in and out. His short-term tenure is reminiscent of the perpetually mismanaged rotational presidency of the former Yugoslavia.

The real power broker in the EU is the European Commission, which is composed of 20 members, one to two persons from each member country. A commissioner, during his tenure, cannot be called to account by any single European country. Twenty commissioners thus have a decent margin of error. Nor are they "German," "Dutch," or "Italian" commissioners; they are, legally speaking, only *European* officials whose *European* allegiances must transcend their own birthplace. Although the EU is no state at all, it has, nonetheless, strong influence on all the states of Europe, and particularly on newly born states in postcommunist Eastern Europe. EU officials can lecture them freely on human rights or the free market and pontificate endlessly about the virtues of the Maastricht monetary convergence. The 20-member Commis-

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sion, in addition, can make political "suggestions" to the EU Parliament and to the European Council.

The essential issue for all European nation-states is whether their national executive and legislative bodies will make sense in the forthcoming borderless and tariff-free Europe. Why should small countries, such as Estonia or Slovenia, which opted out of the defunct Soviet Union and Yugoslavia respectively, continue to cherish their sovereignty—only to anticipate a promiscuous Euroslav marriage? Whom should a Portuguese farmer or an Irish fisherman trust more: his government and his parliament, or an anonymous parliament with anonymous politicians from Brussels? In his recent dystopian novel, *Euroslavia*, Terry Palmer sees the future balkanization of Maastricht Europe . . . *urbi et orbi*.

From Charlemagne and Napoleon through Hitler and Stalin—Europeans have yearned for a united Europe. Yet the true history of Europe, until now, has always been that of wars. What makes us believe that the Maastricht mystique will bring forth affection?

A common currency can hardly bring different peoples together. The existence of the dollar did not prevent the American North from going to war with the American South in 1861; the existence of the ruble did not prevent the break-up of the Soviet Union and the subsequent rubble in Chechnya; the existence of the dinar did not prevent the bust-up of Yugoslavia. To say, therefore, that monetary union is a question of "war or peace" is absurd. Historically, peace reigns where separate, sovereign countries are allowed their own currency and local government.

Moreover, what is the point of having a local national assembly if all political decision-making will be made behind closed doors here in Brussels? What is the point of taking pride in the newly established currencies of Eastern Europe if several years down the road everyone will be obliged to trade with the euro? The richest and freest country in the world, Switzerland, has never been a member of the United Nations or the EU. That's why everybody likes to stash money there.

Nor is big beautiful. The most dynamic countries in the world today are small city-states: Singapore, Hong Kong, and Luxembourg. Tiny Denmark is the cleanest, richest, and safest state in Europe. Therefore, it still has some second thoughts about sanctioning the introduction of the euro. In hindsight it is also worth recalling what Uncle Joe Stalin once said: "The Pope has no military divisions to fight against victorious communism!" Yet the powerful papal minister, called the Vatican, indirectly slayed the dinosaur state called the Soviet Union.

True, the EU may be the last best chance for all Europeans. But the odds are that the European Union may turn into a huge centralized mega-state in which all political decision-making will stem from one center. Furthermore, the introduction of the euro may lead to a new division of Europe: first within the European Union itself, and secondly between the European Union countries and other non-member states. German scholar Thomas Ramb has argued that any enlargement of the European Union eastward might also cost European taxpayers an additional $80 billion annually and trigger a further enlargement of the already huge euro-bureaucracy. The welfare gap between EU-member states and non-member states will likely even lead to massive waves of immigration and cause greater social, racial, and religious tensions. The peoples of Eastern Europe, who have suffered under communism, will find themselves divided by another wall: the Euro-wall. Moreover, each democracy presupposes the existence of a people with its own national mythology. But there is no such thing as "the European people."

The founding myths of the Maastricht mystique stem from recent European history. In 1957, the Rome Agreement was signed between the major states of Western Europe in the hope of greater cooperation and economic integration. This document was a natural fall-out of World War II. In order to please liberal and communist *Gauleiter* from the two opposing yet victorious non-European systems, the ravaged postwar protectorate called Europe had to prove that it was more papal than the Pope (i.e., more united than America and the Soviet Union combined). The objective of the 1992 Maastricht treaty, then, was to finalize the integration of Europe. The irony is that just about this same time the mega-states of Europe—the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia—were breaking up.

The naive idea behind the Maastricht mystique is that Europeans should never go to war again and that their common destiny must be ruled by common economic means. Yet France and England exercised their democratic prerogative to hold referenda on the plethora of Maastricht provisions. Germans were not offered this opportunity, and so the new monetary utopia and the borderless Schengen agreement were delivered not through the popular will of the German people but by unwritten Brussels ukases.

Maastricht Europe, i.e., the Europe of 15 states, has 18.5 million unemployed, 15 percent of its active population. The purchasing power of its middle class is 20 percent less than 20 years ago. The terms "working poor" and "fuel poor" have become part of the political vernacular. How are strong currencies (notably the deutschemark) or other pegged-up currencies (such as the neighboring Danish crown or the Dutch guilder) going to fuse with the weaker currencies—the sluggish *hasta-la-vista* Spanish peseta or the Italian *dolce-vita* lira, which have had an average inflation rate of 12 percent over the last ten years? Moreover, many Germans privately worry that a borderless Europe would open up the gates to millions of real and fake refugees—not just from Kurdistan, but also from distant Bananistan. There are already many doubts about the efficiency of the anonymous Euro-Parliament in Strasbourg, the Euro-Supreme Court, and the unknown movers and shakers from Brussels, whose 20 commissioners are frequently compared to 20 commissars. Naturally, those who have benefited most from Maastricht so far are small second-gear countries, such as Portugal and Greece; they know that the burly German will foot the tab. But for how long?

The same servile mindset prevails within the new political class in Eastern Europe whose main Maastricht cheerleaders are recycled communist apparatchiks. Because of their inferiority complex—which is to a large extent due to their own violent and murky past—they like crawling on all fours in front of EU architects. They think that crawling and mouthing will speed up their entrance into the rich man's club, but they are wrong. The small nation-states of Eastern Europe just rid themselves of the communist Medusa. The Maastricht equivalent of the latter is the last thing they need.

Tomislav Sunic is the cultural counselor at the Croatian Embassy in Brussels.

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Letter From the Argentario

by Andrei Navrozov

Local Color

◆

The promontory of Monte Argentario, billowing on the clothes line of the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy like an Hermès shirt held in place by three pins of land, is famous for its summer resort towns of Porto Ercole and Porto Santo Stefano. The shirt, which has been lost so suddenly by so many here in the recent political upheavals, is a suitable symbol of all the historic beachheads of luxury in that furious sea of imprisonments, confiscations, and fines in whose legal depths the betridented tax man has been playing Neptune. As the Italians do everything together, including shopping at Hermès and going to jail, the Argentario's rivals for his judicious attentions are not many, and all too easy to rumble. Basically, apart from the moneybags encampment on the Emerald Coast of Sardinia, there is only Positano and the rest of the Capri playground to the south, and Portofino, on the Italian Riviera, to the north. The Argentario is somewhere in between, halfway between Genoa and Naples, and the house I am in is perched on a rocky slope across a small bay from Port Ercole.

Formally I am in Tuscany, yet the olive and the vine of Chiantishire seem to belong to an altogether different, far less exotic universe. A few minutes inland by car begin the forests and marshes of the Maremma region, "frontier territory throughout history," a local guidebook says. "It was here that the last Etruscan strongholds of the Vulci and Volsini met with the advancing Roman legions. It was Maremma that marked the confines of the Byzantine and Longobard states and it was here that the border between the Papal State and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was drawn. Today, the same land marks the boundary between Tuscany and Lazio." What this means, in translation from historical euphemism into social topography, is that this is still a refuge for enterprising individualists denounced as brigands, contrabandists, pirates, and thieves. Half an hour away, in the mountain fortress of Capalbio, visitors with a romantic craving for roast wild boar are greeted by an effigy of the bandit Tiburzi, who ruled the Maremma until the turn of the century and knew how to eat well. There are conflicting accounts of who betrayed him and why, but lately I think I'm beginning to get the picture.

Our village is ruled by a man called Franco, whose father opened the only bar and restaurant here when grand villas were still being built by the Romans and the Milanese to accommodate the optimism born of Italy's burgeoning black economy. He is a handsome man, with eyes just blue enough to pick up the colors of the sea from the restaurant's terrace, who may be observed sliding a pizza into the oven one minute and talking into one of the three mobile telephones on his corner table the next. Just when he arrives for work is a bit of a mystery, because obviously I'm still asleep, but he never leaves the restaurant before 2:30 in the morning, when we drink our last Averna together. Here I must announce that in the course of the last two years, since I first met him, I have come to the inescapable conclusion that he is the only man in Italy endowed with what a Russian, an Englishman, and an American could all agree is a sense of humor. Hence he is the only Italian I always take seriously, even when he isn't joking.

Mine is not, I hasten to add, an hysterical case of hero worship, a kind of Patricia Hearst fascination for her own captors or a Soviet housewife's belief that Molotov is sexually irresistible. Yet the truth is that all the summer rentals in the village are handled by Franco on commission, and the query most often overheard at the beach, second only to "*Cosa mangiate?*" or "*Dove andate stasera?*" (we get very few foreigners here), is the vital question of why the wife of this pharmaceutical company president from Bologna or the mistress of that chewing-gum magnate from Turin had been reckless enough to make her own arrangements, instead of "renting through Franco," only to be reduced to a quivering bundle of nerves even before the season started. This evidence of power, naked enough to make captains of industry and their spouses tremble, has two notable consequences.

One of these is best observed in the Mediterranean sun of the early afternoon. It is difficult to get local color right, of course. That burning white hole in the cool blue enamel, inappropriately, always reminds me of a Russian poet who wrote that he was lonely "as the last good eye / of the man who has gone to live among the blind."

Anyway, come early afternoon, Franco sits under the canopied entrance of the bar surrounded by past, present, and future clients, dispensing advice and succor in the manner of some medicine man or scribe in the shade of a baobab tree, or a mango grove, or . . . well, you know what I mean. Think the East, think the nexus of India and Africa, think Somerset Maugham, think Asprey of London. Yes, it is notoriously difficult to get local color right. I note, for instance, in a copy of the *New York Times Magazine* that has floated by me on the beach like a letter in a bottle, that the recipe for Balinese Tuna Salad calls for one and a half teaspoons of kosher salt. Now, that cannot be right. What I am trying to say, I suppose, is that all the prattle of the baobab and the mango is here to suggest that there are some fundamental ways in which Italy is closer to Borneo than to Manhattan.

A pomegranate grove, perhaps? Such trees do grow here, so that is right, but the real point is that those who did not "rent through Franco" shall never enter the pomegranate grove. At least until it is dinner time, while the sun is still high overhead and they are still in their sporty shorts and natty slippers, Italian men are hypochondriac, melancholic, and easy prey for some of the pettiest household paranoias. If their sewer is backing up, they immediately blame their wives for not having "rented through Franco." Their wives are not far behind when it comes to being suggestible, and if the cistern suddenly has no water one can be sure that the husband will be excoriated, by both the wife and the mother-in-law on the premises, for his characteristic obstinacy in supposing that he knew best when he dealt with the owner directly instead of "renting through Franco." And so it happens that those who believed they did good, those arrogant men of worldly influence in distant Milan or Bologna, those bejeweled women with perfect blond highlights in perfect blond hair, are now outcasts, pariahs without protection from the vagaries of nature and fate, social flotsam without access to Franco, condemned to the outer reaches of the bar while the meek inherit and have their refrigerators promptly fixed.

The revolutionary, retributive, or at

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least redistributive overtones of Franco's enterprise, based though it is entirely on the power of suggestion, account for the second of the observable consequences I mentioned. Everyone, rich or poor, has something to say about him behind his back. Typically, the rich say he belongs to the mafia, and when I object, pointing out that he neither drills holes in people's cisterns nor sneaks into houses to tamper with their ancient Italian refrigerators, they put on a thin, sad smile and look away.

The poor are less predictable, perhaps because envy is a finer emotion than fear. Recently the master of a nearby riding school, who had been told I was a friend of Franco's, came up and addressed me as follows: "*Buona sera, signore*. You are a friend of Franco's. Well, let me tell you something. I've got more brains in this little finger on my left hand than Franco has in his entire body."

Excuse me, I said, trying to inject as much of the Valley Girl as I could into what was genuine astonishment, *e allora*? "Well, I've known Franco 30 years, and I just wanted you to know that he is not as clever as he thinks he is. He didn't get where he is by his intelligence." But don't you see that he works like a dog, that he's worked like a dog for all those 30 years, and that this may have had something to do with his success? "Sure he works. But he's got the whole village in hand!" Well, he is an aspiring monopolist, which is another name for a good businessman. Without him, there would be nothing here, true? "True," he conceded grimly, affecting the liplessness of the rich. Because everybody would fight, everybody would quarrel with everybody else, and then the big boys would arrive and build a giant resort hotel for a lot of fat Germans, which would probably close down in a few years. You would have your social justice then, but who would take riding lessons?

I saw that he was unconvinced. In his heart the riding instructor hoped that the whole Argentario would one day be drowned in burning sulfur, if only to prove that the aspiring monopolist was not as clever as everyone thought.

Andrei Navrozov, formerly Chronicles' *poetry editor and London correspondent, is now* Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

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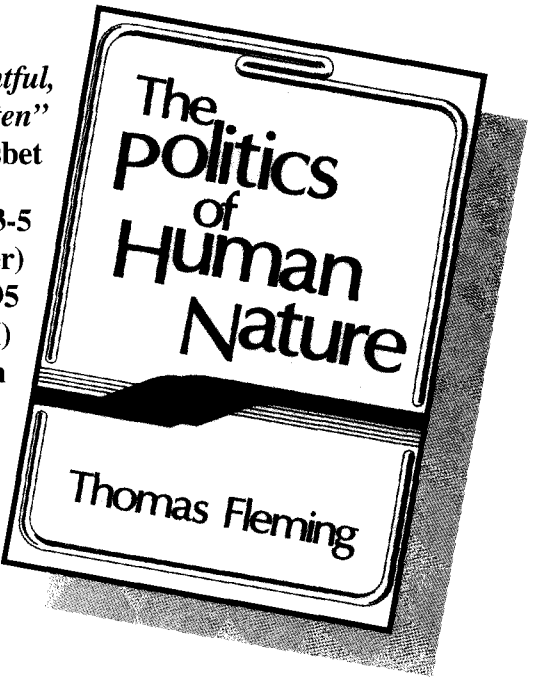
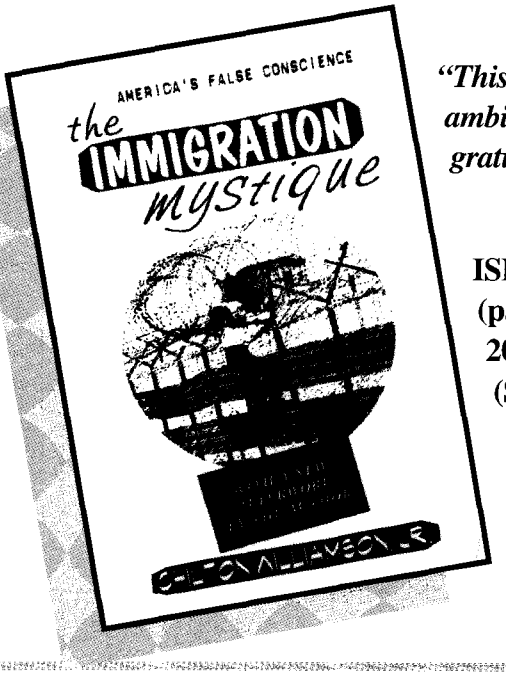


THE IMMIGRATION MYSTIQUE: AMERICA'S FALSE CONSCIENCE
Chilton Williamson, Jr.



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JOURNALISM

The People's Right Not to Know

by Edward E. Ericson, Jr.

When Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn spoke at Harvard University two decades ago, one of the most unfathomable lines in his widely panned commencement address was his lament about "the forfeited right of people not to know." This line was buried within his section charging the press with hastiness and superficiality—and the reporters in attendance rushed out to prove him right about that. With so many misimpressions by the inflammatory foreigner to correct, commentators could hardly be expected to use up precious space to contradict such an obvious instance of tone-deafness to our blessed Bill of Rights from someone manifestly conditioned by totalitarianism. Even those Americans who appreciated Solzhenitsyn's call for spiritual renewal as an antidote to Western hedonism considered this line-in-passing an embarrassing piece of hyperbole.

"The people's right to know" is virtually sacrosanct today. Our Sam Donaldsons repeat the mantra routinely as a sure-fire argument-stopper. Citizens who flinch with discomfort when these words are spoken by media millionaires with vested self-interests are nonetheless disinclined to challenge the line itself. When CNN's Peter Arnett reports information from Baghdad that might imperil the military mission against Saddam Hussein, even patriots fall silent before the principle of the "people's right to know," which trumps any hint of treason.

Solzhenitsyn did amplify his counter-principle a bit. Borrowing our familiar language of rights, he spoke of the people's right "not to have their divine souls stuffed with gossip, nonsense, vain talk," adding, "A person who works and leads a meaningful life has no need for this excessive and burdening flow of information." Mention of "divine souls" goes right past our chattering classes as so much archaic clatter. Religious people, on the other hand, take notice of such rhetoric. If human beings really have souls—and the majority of Americans reportedly think they do—we can hardly ignore the effect on souls of today's so-called information explosion, especially as it is carried into our homes by media elites who generally think we are soulless.

Before the house right now—and apparently for quite a while—is a classic case study of the people's right to know: President Clinton's alleged sexual adventures. Polls show that most Americans would rather not know about them. Such data confound conservative moralists. Mainstream pundits, in contrast, say Americans are becoming mature and sophisticated (like the French) about what they are sure is a constitutional right to privacy. As we have learned by now from Bill Maher and other Deep Thinkers, what happens between two consenting adults is no one else's business, as long as no one is hurt. Besides, guilt-free adultery is a social advance over grandma's puritanical judgmentalism. Americans are approaching the nirvana of total tolerance. That's progress.

Commentators can rise above this lowest-common-denominator tolerance and still not get the story right. Charles Lane, in a column in the *New Republic* (May 25) on Clinton's "Bimbroglio," contrasts "professional journalism's ingrained absolutism about the truth" and the view of "non-journalists" (i.e., the people), for whom "truth is a relative value." Even if one can't stifle a snicker at his depiction of our agenda-driven press as engaged in a "relentless search for the truth," the point to glean from his comments is that for the public "other values can take precedence: social stability, say, or national security." In other words, Lane implicitly acknowledges that preferring not to know (he calls it "disclosure fatigue") is a defensible position.

I doubt our pundits' complacent explanation of Clinton's poll numbers, because I think that the media elites misconstrue human nature and are disconnected from the majority's moral standards. But I also doubt that our conservative moralists—who, goodness knows, have plenty of reason to worry about licentiousness as a growth industry—have evaded the trap of undue alarmism. I prefer to think—and, I admit, I hope—that many, maybe most, people who say they would rather not know about the President's alleged misbehavior say so not because they are tolerant toward it or fatigued by it but because they are offended and embarrassed by it. The graphic details of kneepads and oral sex in the Oval Office make them queasy. Parents of young children, for example, find themselves in a particularly awkward situation as "presidential" news filters into their homes and kids ask questions, as kids will. Public ignorance is not bliss, but it is perhaps the last bulwark of the largely eclipsed concept of common decency, which includes the notion of the President as moral model. Even our talking heads—with old Sam leading the way—first reacted to Monicagate with shock before turning blasé, as if their hearts were not as fully liberated from old moral strictures as their heads are. Ironically, polls show the citizens to be more upset with the newsbearers than with the newsmaker. Why, if not that they are inchoately revealing their wish not to know?

I think the people are validating a legitimate principle but—in this case—are wrongly applying it. Closing an eye to the current tawdriness is not the best strategy for keeping alive the old vision of the President as moral exemplar. When the Head Resident of the White House himself hawks the view that the voters simply "hired" him to do a CEO's job, the public is encouraged to downgrade its sense of the office—and with it a piece of national grandeur. In this situation, I think averting our gaze is too passive a response.

But no matter. The main thing is the principle at stake. There are some things it is bad for us to know. Stuffing our brains with gossip is bad for our souls. So is watching a man blow his brains out on a Los Angeles freeway. Relieving our boredom or satiating our sleaze quotient

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by observing the grotesquely disfigured lives that Jerry Springer parades across our living-room screens is the wrong thing to do. Drawing a curtain across the naked shame of a drunken Noah was the right thing to do.

Media gurus retort that televisions come with an on-off switch. This advice is fine, as far as it goes, which is not far at all. Since most people won't know what to turn off if it's not first turned on, the advice is pretty frivolous and thoroughly self-serving. It leaves the producers with all the rights and the consumers with all the responsibilities. What is the socially redeeming value of this moral asymmetry?

This facile advice tells us more about media types than they realize. It depends upon a solipsistic view of individuals in an atomized society, for it assumes that encouragement of deviance by example will not rend the social fabric. It denies that evil communications corrupt good manners. It assumes the opposite of the ancient principle that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and the fourth generations (our connectedness through time) and imagines that individual actions are devoid of social consequences (our connectedness through space). It neglects any possibility that in the media world we are our brother's keeper. It reveals, in short, the moral vacuity of the advisers and the amoral character of the advice—what Solzhenitsyn calls a "smug secularism that cannot see beyond itself."

Does the logic of these musings lead to a case for censorship? We are now on secular America's holiest ground: censorship is the greatest abomination. But of course we don't really abhor censorship. A politicized society hears "censorship" and thinks "government." In practice, we all accept censorship of some sort. Parents engage in it daily. So do professors, and just about everyone else, media elites included. They know there are lines they cannot cross—the ire of the editor, the preoccupations of the publisher or producer, the desires of advertisers, the concerns of vocal media watchdog groups, the cautions of ombudspersons, the approval of professional peers. The heart's desire of media professionals may prompt them to keep testing the lines at any given moment, and they may—and do—try to shift the unspoken lines to encompass content hitherto forbidden. But they implicitly or explicitly self-censor daily. They just don't talk about it. As communication scholars put it, the media are gatekeepers. This very image vitiates their proclamations of the people's untrammeled right to know.

The issue, then, is not censorship *per se*. The issue is on what basis, and according to whose standard, censorship is conducted. Ask broadcasters this question, and a one-word answer returns: ratings. What unseemly traffic will the public bear? As the Romans learned long ago, even quite prurient appeals to people's base desires will generate quite a bit of traffic. What this answer fails to acknowledge, however, is that the media *create* an appetite for the unwholesome, the degrading, the illicit—for the next-generation Jerry Springer—as certainly as they satisfy it.

Whatever else this answer tells us, it bespeaks the amorality of the marketplace. (One useful function of the Democratic Party used to be to remind us of this.) If morality is to be imbued into the media marketplace, someone must do the imbuing. Who? The transmitters? Sure, but only according to the lights of their worldview, and these limited lights do not at the moment include the needs of human hearts. The transmitters can produce programs on the dangers of smoking and bad eating habits and on medical breakthroughs and on whatever else might nourish the unspoken impossible desire to keep our animal beings thinking and copulating in perpetuity. But a shrunken view of human beings curtails the range of their moral vision. So there's nothing to stop the mainstreaming of porn on TV or the ever racier lines by heavy-breathing women selling Levi's to men.

Short of the infiltration of high media offices by people with high moral sensibility, which would probably take a religious revival to achieve, receptors will have to do the main job of self-censorship. All hail to those who are trying. Some parents, considering the situation extreme, have taken the extreme measure of junking their TV sets, willing to do without C-SPAN's wonderful window on the world to avoid the ravaging of their children's souls, and their own, too. It is not impossible for discontented consumers to achieve the critical mass necessary to get morally subversive products canceled. Boycotts can override the moral somnolence of advertisers.

But how much better it would be if there were some moral symmetry between the two sides in the media exchange! Hark back to the advent of television. The talk then was of the social cohesion, the intellectual enrichment, the moral reinforcement that the new medium could provide. In our decayed cultural condition, the odds are against implementing that vision, for what once seemed pristinely possible now seems pitifully naive, if not downright intolerant. Solzhenitsyn observed of America, "Voluntary self-restraint is almost unheard of." But there are Americans who believe in the principle, and nothing requires them to stay silent about it. Reticence and modesty are not un-American precepts.

Television exposes its bad conscience by staging navel-gazing talk shows in which commentators second-guess their own decisions. Imagine if every time someone invoked "the right to know" on one of these programs, someone else countered with the equally valid right *not* to know. It would be a rhetorical response only. But words have power, and repeating words is how we create common wisdom. Who knows? Maybe we'd start hearing conversations that moved beyond rights-talk. Maybe social responsibility would become more than an empty slogan. That would be a real countercultural revolution.

Edward E. Ericson, Jr., is a professor of English at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The *Progressive Review*

by Jesse Walker

The left-wing press is in an awful state. Take the *Nation* (please): there's little reason even to flip through it anymore. Oh, Alexander Cockburn is always a pleasure, and Stuart Klawans is a fine movie critic, and Christopher Hitchens is worth reading when he isn't issuing pretentious dispatches from Europe. But good feature stories are as rare there as in the *Weekly Standard*: where once one might have expected to find an essay by Gore Vidal or an investigative report by the late Penny Lernoux, one's much more likely to see a slavish defense of the President against the alleged vast

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right-wing conspiracy to dethrone him, or a ridiculous article by Jay Walljasper, breathlessly declaring that one yuppie town or another should be the new social model for the left.

Similar ills bedevil *Mother Jones* and the *Progressive* and (worst of all) the *Utne Reader*. The average reader should be forgiven for assuming that there is no good leftist writing in this country at all. For alternatives, one must turn to publications that are either obscure (Warren Hinckle's *Argonaut*, Paul Piccone's *Telos*, Jason McQuinn's *Alternative Press Review*) or, more often, local. Oregonians, for example, can read the *Portland Free Press*, a sometimes amateurish but freethinking and lively bimonthly. Northern California is home to the best left-wing paper in the country, the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*. And here in Washington, D.C., there is the *Progressive Review*, edited by one of the few truly independent minds left in ideological journalism, Sam Smith.

The *Review* began as the *Capitol East Gazette*, a neighborhood paper Smith founded back in 1966. The original *Gazette* folded in the wake of the riots of 1968. "A certain number of our readers," Smith recalls, "had decided to burn down a certain number of our advertisers. This created a very difficult marketing situation." So the *Capitol East Gazette* became the *D.C. Gazette*, a paper for all the neighborhoods of the city.

Like other alternative papers of the time, the *D.C. Gazette* opposed the Vietnam War and endorsed civil rights. But its chief focus was local, a voice for people who didn't want the feds to force a freeway through their block. Nor was it "liberal," at least in the modern sense of the word. Its readers were more likely to be on the receiving end of the war on poverty than the dispensing side, a somewhat different vantage from which to view the federal edifice. ("Most people who are alive today have never seen a liberal do anything worthwhile," Smith comments. "I'm old enough to remember when leftists and liberals actually did something, which is why I would not describe myself as anti-liberal or anti-leftist. I just think the current crowd is pretty pathetic." More on that later.) And there was an interest in what at the time was called "building alternative community structures," such as the experiments in direct democracy and community technology then taking place in the Adams-Morgan neighborhood. (The Adams-Morgan experience is described well in Karl Hess's 1979 book, *Community Technology*, though Hess neglects to mention how the most famous effort, an experiment in basement-based aquaculture, came to a sudden end. "They were trying to grow trout in the basement of a building," Smith recalls. "This was one of the great efforts in urban agriculture—which came to a crashing halt when we had our first post-trout brownout." All the fish died, and the stench wafted deep into the streets. After that, "we went back to eating trout from natural streams.")

By the mid-80's, the local beat was burning Smith out. Tired of repeating himself, he remade his paper yet again, turning his attention to the national and global scenes. But it's hard to rinse the sidewalks from your blood: the rechristened *Progressive Review* has not only continued to cover Washington issues, but even its national and international coverage often hinges on a concrete, local angle. This reflects the editor's distrust for abstraction, his firm belief that "it's very difficult to talk in any sensible way about any policy" if you have "stepped out from the real . . . into a totally theoretical world." The *Review* presently exists in two forms: as a monthly newsletter, usually consisting of one long essay by Smith and several smaller items, and as a constantly updated website (emporium.turnpike.net/P/ProRev), filled with short remarks about current events; items of interest to activists of greenish, localist, or civil libertarian hue; and investigative reports on the misdeeds of the high and mighty. (The Clinton administration does not fare well.) Unable to resist the pull of city politics, Smith has opened a second site, the D.C. News Service (emporium.turnpike.net/P/ProRev/freedc.htm), chiefly dedicated to overthrowing the federally appointed control board that now runs the city. The control board has a bias towards bureaucracy and little regard for democratic input; as such, it is Smith's perfect foil.

Smith is, as I've said, a man of the left, albeit one more likely to quote Chesterton than Marx. Forced to shove him onto the silly, constricting map called the political spectrum, I'd place him somewhere between Eugene McCarthy and Paul Goodman. Yet in recent years, he's found himself increasingly alienated from liberal and leftist elites. In this he is not alone: never before has the American left faced such a tremendous split between the real grassroots and the foundation-sucking spivs who claim to speak for them. Smith actually believes in decentralization and individual liberty, and while his interpretation of those phrases might not always jibe with, say, Murray Rothbard's, they're an even ungainlier fit with the views of the Pew Charitable Trusts. You will find no apologias for the Clintons in the *Progressive Review*, no politically correct jargon, no snooty condescension toward rural and suburban America, no defenses of federal departments that do more for their employees than for their clients.

Back in the 1980's, Smith made what he now calls "a rather naive effort" to work with Americans for Democratic Action. The stormy marriage finally fell apart over the War on Drugs. Smith and some others passed some resolutions suggesting that the nation should adopt a drug policy "that wasn't based on the premise that it's all right to send young black males to prison for preferring marijuana to daiquiris." The politicians who actually run the organization were not amused. Smith soon left, and today describes liberals as "AWOL."

Nor is Smith a conservative. ("I think the bind I find myself in is that too many conservatives want to ignore people who have problems, and too many liberals want to tell them what to do.") Nor is he a libertarian. ("I could never be an acceptable libertarian, although I clearly have libertarian streaks, because I believe in community too much.") He's the sort of fellow you'll hate if you're the type who judges a man by how closely each and every opinion he holds coincides with yours: like all those who think for themselves, he's sure to have some opinions you don't share. I can't, for example, see how he can oppose the war on narcotics yet want to expand government restrictions on tobacco, even if he insists it's the industry he wants to target, not the smokers. (That's like locking up the prostitutes and freeing the johns.) But that's irrelevant: what matters is the spirit that motivates his views, not every view itself. Smith's decentralist creed leaves plenty of room for diversity and debate. He recalls some early meetings of the Maine Greens, in which a fellow from the Reform Party and a couple of Libertarians turned up. The reformer stuck around, and

> wrote a piece in which he said the difference between the Greens and

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the Reform Party is largely centered over the issue of property. But then he said that we agree that we don't want this issue decided by the national media or by national politicians. And that, I thought, was a very profound comment. The things we disagree on do not necessarily have to be decided at the macro level. We can work out our own arrangements, we can have our own debates, and that's a lot healthier.

On his own micro level, Smith enjoys life in Washington, D.C.—not the official Washington of lobbyists and lawmakers, but the pleasant backwater below it: "this has been a wonderful city for me. It's been a wonderful place to raise kids. . . . It's got a nice pleasant pace to it, as long as you're not striving to get too much power or striving to make too much money." And if you are? "One of the things I notice about people in power in Washington is how rootless many of them are. It's been said that they're the sort of people that when they're in a room by themselves, there's no one there."

"One of the things I do these days," he tells me,

> is talk to groups of younger activists. And one of the things missing today is the idea that seemed normal to me, as a child of the existential period and a product of a Quaker education, that you have to make choices, whether the times are good or bad. . . . I was talking in a bookstore in Maine, and a guy who was about 30 came up to me afterwards. He said to me, "I came in late to your talk, and I heard you talking about choice. And I assumed you were talking about abortion. You know, you really ought to be careful using that word, because people might misunderstand you."

I interject: "And you said, 'No, I was talking about school vouchers.'"

He laughs, politely, then returns to his story. "But that really set me off thinking. And I realized, choice for young people is a choice of consumption, a choice of association; the idea that it is a constant moral activity is not very strong. . . . Matthew Arnold talked about living in two worlds, one dead and the other not able to be born. That's the sort of sense you have of this time."

Jesse Walker writes from Washington, D.C.

GOVERNMENT

Territorial Bliss

by Joseph E. Fallon

One consequence of the Cold War has gone unnoticed. Before the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union collapsed, the United States had already ceased to exist. To fight the Cold War and in the name of national security, Washington had destroyed the political structure created by the U.S. Constitution—the well-defined union of states, which regardless of territorial size, population, or date of admission, possessed equal powers—and replaced it with an ambiguous political system composed of 50 states and a hierarchy of eight ethnic/race-based territories.

Historically, a territory was a temporary political status granted to land administered by the federal government as long as the population was too small and scattered to govern as a state. Under the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, states were to be carved out of existing territories and admitted to the union on the basis of political equality with the original 13 states. This occurred with the Northwest Territory, Southwest Territory, Louisiana Territory, Oregon Territory, and the Mexican Cession.

Since territorial status was temporary, those which did not become states became independent countries or were transferred, in whole or part, to a foreign power. Examples of the former are Cuba in 1903 and the Philippines in 1946. Examples of the latter are the northwest portion of the Louisiana Territory (1818), the northeast portion of Maine (1842), the northern half of the Oregon Territory (1846), and a third of the Alaskan panhandle (1903)—all of which were transferred to the United Kingdom; Okinawa, which was transferred to Japan (1972); and the Panama Canal and Canal Zone Territory, which were transferred to Panama (1978, to be completed by 1999).

Beginning with the establishment of the "Commonwealth" of Puerto Rico in 1952, all this changed. Citing the "doctrine of incorporation" (a theory promulgated by the U.S. Supreme Court between 1901 and 1922, according to which the U.S. Constitution does not fully apply to a territory until it is "incorporated" into the union) and Article IV, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution ("Congress shall have all power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States"), Congress radically altered the political structure created by the Constitution. Unlike states, territories became *de facto* ethnic-based polities that exercise political powers denied to the states.

In descending order of official status, these territories consist of: three "free associations" (the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, both established in 1986, and Palau, established in 1993), two "commonwealths" (Puerto Rico, established in 1952, and the Northern Marianas, established in 1986), two "organized" territories whose structure of government was created by congressional legislation known as an organic act (Guam, established in 1950, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, established in 1936, revised in 1954), and one "unorganized" territory whose structure of government was created through local legislation (American Samoa, established in 1960).

"Free association" is officially recognized by the United Nations as an alternative to independence for a trust territory, and this status allows the local population the maximum degree of self-government while insuring that the former administrative power continues to finance and defend that territory. This status could only be conferred upon the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau because they are the successor states to the United Nations Strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which the United States administered from 1947 to 1993.

The term "commonwealth" as applied to a U.S. territory, however, is devoid of any legal meaning. In the *Examining Board* v. *Flores de Otero* (1976), the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged that the commonwealth status of Puerto Rico "occupies a relationship with the United

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States that has no parallel in our history." Congress was more direct. In its 1976 report, "The Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," the Senate bluntly stated: "The term 'commonwealth' is not a word describing any single kind of political relationship or status." What this means in real terms is that, despite the differences in the scope of the political powers exercised by American Samoa, Guam, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, the Northern Marianas, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, each possesses powers greater than the states.

The most important power Congress has awarded the territories is local control over immigration, a power denied to the states since 1875, when the federal government established direct regulation over immigration. Recognizing that immigration can have an adverse impact on the demographics of a land, Congress has given American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, the Northern Marianas, and Palau the right to control immigration to their territories so those islanders can preserve their ethnic, racial, and cultural identities.

When this power was abused, it only highlighted the superior political position enjoyed by the territories. In the Northern Marianas, local control over immigration has been exploited by an alliance of businesses and politicians to inundate the archipelago with Third World laborers, principally Chinese and Filipinos. As a result, Third World immigrants (usually working for less than minimum wage) now constitute 90 percent of the private labor force, while the unemployment rate for the native-born exceeds 14 percent.

Expressing concern over the adverse economic impact that Third World immigration is having on the local population, the Clinton administration has proposed that Congress abolish the Northern Marianas' right to control immigration to its islands, thus returning that power to Washington. Although Third World immigration to the 50 states is depressing the wages of native-born workers by $133 billion a year, displacing over two million native-born workers annually, and contributing to an unemployment rate for blacks that is twice the national average, this adverse economic impact elicits no such concern from the Clinton administration.

Congress has also permitted territories to enact land alienation laws—i.e., to place race-based restrictions on the ownership of land. In order to own land in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, or Palau, one must be a citizen of that particular "republic," which, in effect, means one must belong to a specific ethnic group. One must meet a prescribed definition of island "descent" to own any land in the Northern Marianas and most land in American Samoa. Such racial restrictions on land ownership violate the equal protection clause and the privileges and immunities clause of the 14th Amendment, and the just compensation clause of the Fifth Amendment. Moreover, Congress grants the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau their own separate citizenship.

Congress also allows all eight territories separate representation in international organizations. American Samoa belongs to six international organizations; Guam, 14; the Federated States of Micronesia, 16; the Marshall Islands, 14; the Northern Marianas, nine; Palau, 12; Puerto Rico, 14; and the U.S. Virgin Islands, seven. For example, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau are members of the United Nations; American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Marianas have membership in the South Pacific Commission; Puerto Rico has membership and the U.S. Virgin Islands has observer status in the Caribbean Economic Community; and all eight territories are members of the International Olympic Committee. Such attributes of sovereignty are denied to the states.

Congress even permits the Northern Marianas to violate proportional representation in its legislature. The islands of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan are provided equal representation despite the fact that the population of Saipan is six times greater than the other two islands combined. Therefore, there is one Senator for 4,500 residents on Saipan, 400 residents on Rota, and 250 residents on Tinian. This violates the equal protection clause of the 14th and 15th Amendments. It also violates the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Reynolds* v. *Sims* (1964), which ruled that both chambers of a bicameral legislature must be apportioned on the basis of population; otherwise, an individual's vote has been "in a substantial fashion diluted." The Court expressly declared "historical, economic, or other groups' interests, or area alone, do not justify deviation from the equal-proportion principle."

Congress permits American Samoa to limit membership in the upper chamber of its legislature to village chiefs (*matai*) chosen according to Samoan customs. This violates the privileges and immunities clause of the 14th Amendment by restricting the Senate to the Samoan nobility.

Finally, Congress permits American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and even the District of Columbia to have delegates to the U.S. House of Representatives who can vote in its subcommittees, full committees, and caucuses. This practice violates the 14th Amendment. The votes of the citizens of the 50 states are "in a substantial fashion diluted" because the voting power of their elected representatives in the respective committees and caucuses has been adulterated. Although the delegates from these five "territories" do not vote on bills before the full House, by voting in the subcommittees, full committees, and caucuses they help determine what bills actually make it to the floor of the full House for such a vote.

Nor does the restructuring of the United States end here. There is the demand that Puerto Rico be given statehood—but a statehood with privileges. The current Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico to the U.S. House of Representatives (and a former governor of the island), Carlos Romero-Barceló, advocates Puerto Rican statehood not on the basis of U.S. patriotism but on the bene-

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fits of the welfare state. As he explained in *Statehood is for the Poor* (1978):

> If it were a state, Puerto Rico would be absolutely assured of enormous amounts of federal money—money the island needs in order to come to grips with its many problems. . . . Puerto Rico's per capita contribution to the federal treasury, were we a state, would come to less than that of any other state in the Union. At the same time, the per capita benefits we'd reap from federal aid programs would be greater than those of any other state in the Union. On top of all this, we'd also have seven or eight Puerto Ricans serving as full voting members of Congress, working up in Washington at all times to help draft and pass new and improved social welfare legislation.

This would be an unprecedented kind of statehood. As Romero-Barceló maintained then and now: "Yes, we want statehood, but neither our language nor our culture is negotiable."

The bill on Puerto Rican statehood recently passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, H.R. 856, does not mandate English as the official language of the new state—as was previously required for Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma under the terms of their respective Enabling and Admission Acts. Should H.R. 856 become law, Congress will not possess the legal authority to require Puerto Rico to conduct any of its governmental activities in English. As the American Law Division of the Congressional Research Service wrote in October 1997: "Under existing precedents, its seems highly unlikely that Congress could under its legislative powers and acting only through a statute mandate that a State conducts its official affairs using a language of Congress' choosing." In other words, such flawed legislation as H.R. 856 would not only violate established congressional procedure, it would make the United States a *de facto* bilingual country. Puerto Rico would become for the United States what Quebec is for Canada.

Some proponents of statehood for Puerto Rico are even demanding that the island retain the powers over immigration and land alienation currently permitted to other territories. Still others openly proclaim their dedication to restructuring the United States into a federation of "nations." As lawyer, editor, and political activist Luis R. Dávila-Colón wrote in *The Supranational Union: An Evolving Model of Statehood for Twenty-First Century America*:

> The future admission of its overseas territories and the District of Columbia, as equal members of the Union, would lay the groundwork for a stronger Union and, perhaps in time, for the sharing of the American system of government with nations which may want to share *our* dreams, progress and democratic values. The notion that we have a living Constitution which adapts to the realities of a changing world, suggests to this writer, that the concept of "We The People . . ." may one day include as fully sovereign states, Black, Hispanic, Pacific, poor and not so poor Nations and societies, all willing to share a common Federal government.

Translation: The United States should become a colony of the Third World. Every country and dependency desirous of having unlimited access to the U.S. Treasury should be able to "join" the United States. And to facilitate the admittance of such new "states," the United States should abolish its language and culture, citizenship and laws, and be politically restructured into a "United Nations."

This "futurist" idea of a "supranational union" is as old as the Babylonian Empire. It has been revived many times throughout the 20th century—only to fail. Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union have all disintegrated; Bosnia, Burma, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Turkey are only held together by armed force; and Canada and Belgium are peacefully careening toward electoral dissolution. Yet Congress is determined that the United States repeat this failed "experiment" and to that end has politically restructured the Union into a contradictory mix of polities, powers, and hierarchies.

In *The Federalist*, John Jay wrote: "It has often given me pleasure to observe, that Independent America was not composed of detached and distant territories, but that one connected, fertile, wide spreading country was the portion of our western sons of liberty." Two centuries later, these words no longer apply.

Joseph E. Fallon writes from Rye, New York. This article is excerpted from the monograph, "Deconstructing America: Immigration, Nationality and Statehood," published by the Council for Social and Economic Studies.

GUNS

Gun Sense and Sensibility

by Dave Kopel

When Senator Robert Kennedy was assassinated 30 years ago with a cheap imported handgun, I was among the many Americans who believed that America's "gun culture" was out of control. To me, it seemed obvious that all guns should be banned. At the least, a psychiatric test ought to be required for anybody who wanted to own a gun. Yet 30 years after a gunman deprived America of the chance to elect Robert Kennedy instead of the criminal Richard Nixon, I am writing my first gun rights column for *Chronicles*. And I feel especially comfortable writing about gun rights in "a magazine of American culture" because I've come to believe that gun ownership represents some of the very best of American culture. How did I get here from there?

In the coming months, I'll discuss not only the practical importance of firearms ownership—such as the public safety benefits of guns in the right hands—but I'll also examine the cultural aspects of guns in America: why some people love guns, and why others loathe them.

Regarding the latter group, some people believe, including many of the supporters of Sarah Brady's Handgun Control, Inc., that the use of force by anyone who is not a government employee is immoral. As Mrs. Brady states, "To me, the only reason for guns in civilian hands is for sporting purposes." James Brady agrees: asked by *Parade* magazine if private possession of handguns were defensible, he replied, "For target shooting, that's okay. Get a license and go to the

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range. For defense of the home, that's why we have police departments."

Likewise, Professor M.L. Friedland of the University of Toronto, father of Canada's modern gun legislation, argued that

> a person who wishes to possess a handgun should have to give a legitimate reason. . . . To protect life or property . . . should not be a valid reason. . . . Citizens should rely on the police, security guards, and alarm systems for protection.

In the eyes of some gun-prohibition advocates, the right to life itself must be subjugated to "civilization." The late David Clarke, then-president of Washington, D.C.'s City Council, told the *Washingtonian* that his efforts to outlaw gun ownership for self-defense were "designed to move this government toward civilization. . . . I don't intend to run the government around the moment of survival."

Simply put, many advocates of gun control are not especially concerned with whether it saves lives. Survey data consistently show that about half of all gun control supporters do not believe that stricter laws will have an impact on crime or violence. (For more on this topic, see Gary Kleck's new book, *Targeting Guns.*)

The idea that it would be better for someone to die than to use force to defend herself was explicitly stated in testimony before Congress by a representative of the largest denomination of the Presbyterian Church. The idea is also implicit in that church's recent call to its members to get rid of all handguns in their homes. But this odd form of selective mandatory pacifism (which, according to the gun control lobbies, should only apply to people who don't work for the government) explains some but not all of the anti-gun sentiment. One of the social uses of gun control is that, even if it does nothing to make anyone any safer, it provides psychological benefits to some people by symbolically controlling the world's dangers.

To understand some of the roots of the anti-gun movement, read E.P. Evans' *The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals: The Lost History of Europe's Animal Trials.* As Evans details, in early modern European law there was an extensive system for legal punishment of animals. If a pig killed a baby or a swarm of locusts ate a crop, the animals would be charged with legal offenses. They would be defended by a court-appointed lawyer who would use all of the ordinary tools of law; in one famous case, the lawyer appointed to defend rats who had eaten the region's barley argued successfully that the rats could not be prosecuted because the legal notice of prosecution had not been publicized widely enough to encompass all the areas where the rats lived.

Once a court obtained proper jurisdiction, the animals were usually but not always convicted. Animal defendants whom the court could apprehend, such as domestic pigs, would often be tortured to death, just as human criminals were.

Nicholas Humphrey's foreword to the 1906 edition of Evans' book suggests that the people who executed pigs did not believe that pigs could form criminal intent or be deterred by the punishment of their fellows. Rather, he argues that people were terrified by the seemingly random nature of bad events, which implied that perhaps there was no order to the universe. Thus, the purpose of punishing animals

> was to establish cognitive control. . . . The job of the courts was to domesticate chaos, and to impose order on a world of accidents—and specifically to make sense of certain seemingly inexplicable events by redefining them as crimes. . . . The child's death became explicable. The child had died as an act of calculated wickedness, and however awful that still was, at least it made some kind of sense.

While punishing animals was popular on the Continent, punishing inanimate objects was more popular in England (as it had been in ancient Greece). If a criminal killed someone with a sword, the sword would be forfeited. If a man fell from a tree, the tree was cut down. If he drowned in a well, the well was filled up. If a criminal killed a victim with a third party's sword, "the sword shall be forfeit as deodand, and yet no default is in the owner." According to Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., a steam-engine was even forfeited under this doctrine.

The legal term "deodand" meant a gift to God of the object causing death. In early America, one court ordered the destruction of a canoe that had failed "to make way in a storm," causing its owner's death. A Virginia court ordered the chain by which a boy had hanged himself to be forfeit as deodand. Similarly, in ancient Greece, a statue that fell on someone would be banished beyond the city limits.

The tradition of punishing non-humans is very old; Exodus 21:28 commands, "If an ox gore a man or a woman and they die, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten." If the sole purpose for this ordinance were to remove a dangerous animal from the community, there would be no mandate to treat oxen like human criminals deserving community punishment nor would there be any injunction against eating the animal's flesh.

Prosecuting pigs and banishing swords may seem primitive to late 20th-century postmodern Americans, but it would be unwise for us to feel too superior to our predecessors. In Chicago and Philadelphia, a relatively small number of people (mostly single young males with no father figure in their lives) commit a large number of predatory violent crimes, sometimes with guns. The "solution" being seriously considered by Philadelphia Mayor Rendell and Chicago Mayor Daley is to sue the manufacturers of firearms.

Albert Cohen described this phenomenon as the "evil causes evil fallacy," the belief that bad consequences must have bad causes. Perhaps it is easier to trace America's problems to "wicked" objects like guns or drugs, rather than to consider the depressing possibility that America may include a large number of wicked people.

The desire to blame never changes, but the expression of the desire is highly variable. In the earlier part of this century, the blame for a criminal's commission of a violent act with a gun would have been placed primarily on the criminal himself, and secondarily on the biological father who abandoned the mother not long after conception. But today, many people seem to believe that human beings are helpless automatons who cannot be held responsible for their actions. Instead, responsibility must be placed on physical objects such as firearms, which apparently embody the moral flaws that can no longer be attributed to people.

Dave Kopel is the research director of the Independence Institute, a free-market think tank in Colorado.

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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Something in Colorado

"Hear that," Dick McIlhenny said.

He removed the headset and handed it to me, while holding the Bionic Ear cupped toward the woods.

"I hear it."

"What does it sound like to you?"

"Footfalls, coming this way. Look at that horse."

The gelding stood at attention behind the trailer, his body rigid and his ears forward while the mare cropped the little grass she could reach from the shortened length of rope. The dark woods dripped around the circle of light the lantern made, and in the headset the measured stealthy tread drew closer. I shucked it off and gave Dick back the equipment.

"It's just Larki pulling grass," I said.

We heated coffee on the Primus stove and opened two MREs from the carton Dick had brought. The night chilled, and rain started to fall again. We drew on ponchos and ate supper off the dropped tailgate of the pickup truck, the shotguns within easy reach under the camper shell.

"I vote we sleep in the truck tonight," Dick said.

"Agreed. It will be a hell of a lot drier."

"And safer. We're not secure surrounded this way by woods."

While he arranged the truck bed and unrolled the sleeping bags I watered the horses and loaded them in the trailer for security, leaving only the manger doors open to the night. It got colder and the rain went on falling, stirring the branches of the fir trees and turning the surface of the logging road slick.

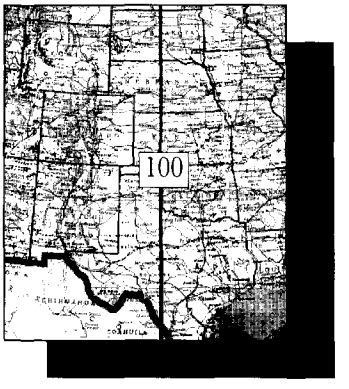
"You think this could turn to snow by morning?" I asked.

"Probably not. Today is only the fourth of August."

"And we're at 11,000 feet, don't forget."

We turned in in our clothes, and Dick pulled the tailgate up and drew down the back window of the camper shell and locked it. Lying in the unzippered bags with the shotguns beside us, we heard the rain pattering on the fiberglass roof and watched the glass fog over with our breath.

"I was hoping we'd hear something



tonight," Dick said.

"It could be the rain. Everything's taken cover until the weather clears."

"Will the horses let us know if something does come in?"

"I think so. It all depends on what they take this thing for."

"I'm starting to drift. If the balloon goes up, I expect we'll know about it."

At first light the mists ascended like spirits from the forest before the sun climbed above the mountains, turning the gray cloud ceiling above it gold. We boiled water for coffee on the little stove and struck the camp, packing it back in the truck while the clouds burned away and the summer day grew bright and hot. Eight hundred vertical feet below, an open park at the end of another logging road offered a view of the forest around and alpine peaks rising over 12,000 feet to the south. On a rise of ground between the creek running through the park and the forest edge we made a second camp, raising the tent and staking the horses to graze on the lush grass. It was a good camp having a good view of the approaches all around, except for a point of the woods running close in behind the flat place where the tent stood. We gathered wood, built a fire to signal our presence and boil water for tea, and sat in the late afternoon sun with the tin cups in front of us and the big revolvers on the camp table beside the cups, glassing an elk herd bedded a half-mile out and a couple of thousand feet above on the steep alpine meadow where patches of snow remained.

"Have you thought what it was you might have heard if it wasn't that?" I asked Dick.

"I've thought. Nothing that's supposed to belong here: elk, bear, moose, cougar, wolf, coyote—"

The sound came a mile or so from camp in the direction of the lake: a cry such as a man—a giant one—could produce and yet not like a man's. Singers call it a calling voice: in the head, unmixed with chest tone but with no trace of falsetto.

"There it goes," I said.

It lasted about four minutes, changing pitch several times in a tonal step-up or step-down that gave it a distinctly musical quality, and when it ceased Dick still had not succeeded in getting the recording equipment set up.

"Is it what you heard at Leadville?" I asked.

He nodded. "Pretty much."

"What do you suppose it means?"

"It means the word is on the street already. I think we can look forward to an encounter tonight."

I threw damp wood on the fire for a heavier smoke column as Keith Hawkins and his son Andrew arrived from Kansas after stopping to check the bait they had set out three weeks before on the southeastern end of the ridge at the top of a talus slide above the river. The curiosity bait with its wax tabula for recording hand prints had been untouched, and so were the other baits Keith had rigged. Enclosed in the Jeep Cherokee, rattling and grinding on the rough mountain roads, they had not heard the sound which had ceased only a half-hour before. They raised their tent beside ours and parked the Jeep to fill in the semicircle of vehicles arranged like a wagon train expecting attack. Finally we let the fire burn down to coals and cooked our supper over them, while boiling another pot for tea. A small thunderstorm blew up over the peaks, silver veils of rain falling from black clouds through the golden light of the evening sun, and from the stony bowl above the camp a pack of coyotes whooped and nattered.

"Something set them off," Keith Hawkins said thoughtfully.

Fully dressed except for our boots we turned in at nightfall around ten o'clock after shutting the horses away in the trailer, securing the camp, and arranging the flashlights and loaded guns to hand in case of emergency while the moon, ris-

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ing above the treetops, diffused its light like a silver gas as far as the black, impenetrable shadow of the surrounding forest.

The Bionic Ear magnified our own breathing and the sounds of sleep from the tent next door, and after we turned it off and lay awake in the darkness, listening, our own ears, aided by the imagination, picked up impulses the electronic model did not. The horses, confined in the trailer, stamped and pawed; caught in the Mag-Lite, their faces hanging through the open mangers looked impatient and alert, not quite apprehensive. Deep in the night I awoke and moved to the door of the tent. Something was talking from the darkness a quarter-mile or less from camp: the voice we had heard the afternoon before, modified from a calling volume to an almost conversational pitch. It ran on and on as if talking to itself, and once there was another sound—two spaced clicks, as if a couple of rocks were being knocked sharply together. I waited to be certain it was not a dream, and then shook Dick awake. He reared from the bag like a galvanized corpse and lay back down again, his beard white in the moonlight through the open flap of the tent. "Do you hear it?" I whispered. He signaled affirmatively but he was not really awake, and when the talking in the woods stopped and did not resume I lay down myself and slept until first light, when I thought a heard a crow calling from the trees behind the camp. Only I didn't remember seeing crows or ravens in the mountains since we arrived.

At breakfast Keith mentioned a clacking sound he had heard from the forest during the night, like two rocks knocked together. "That's primate behavior," he remarked. "Dominance display perhaps. Could be a threat, even." He left with Andrew to look for footprints at the bottom of the talus slide and cast for trout down on the river while Dick and I saddled the horses and rode out to the end of the logging road. Where the road quit after a mile we dismounted and tied up. From the broken rock lying around on the ground we selected a couple of hand-sized chunks, and Dick climbed astride one of the barked logs. "The way to find this thing," he said, "is to make sure it finds us first."

Seated back to back to survey the woods around we banged rocks together and, using a single rock, pounded the log until it reverberated like a drum in the hot resinous stillness of midafternoon. Then we untied the horses and returned to camp, which stood intact and unmolested. We built the fire back, set the pot to boil on the grate, and sat at the table to watch the afternoon storms build above the bare red peaks. "Even if we don't find it," I said, "it's wonderful to be in the mountains again."

The sound arose in the southeast, overriding the confusion of the approaching storm: a voluminous roar with a scream above it, a two-track cry like separate voices bonded to produce a single one. It came and came again, each attack following instantly upon the release, a surging cry echoed repeatedly across the darkening wilderness, diffused by distance but overwhelming still and terrific, lasting three and a half minutes.

"It's too far out to pick up," I said as Dick went for the Ear and his recording equipment. "Keith must have gotten an earful where he and Andrew went to check bait, though."

"As far as tonight goes, I'm afraid *we're* the bait," Dick said.

At bedtime I tied the horses to stand sentry behind the trailer. Dick and I were working hard to talk ourselves awake when we woke suddenly outside the tent, in our sockfeet clutching 12-gauge shotguns among flashing lights, a wailing siren, and a car horn sounding, while somewhere in the darkness Keith Hawkins shouted, "False alarm!" Wakened by a prolonged episode of rock clacking at a distance of about a hundred yards from camp, he listened for 20 minutes before setting off the car alarm accidentally. It was two in the morning and almost as bright as day in the full moon, except for the black forest that seemed to have moved in closer during the night. Keith laughed. "I bet that thing is still running," he said. "We won't be hearing any more from it tonight."

He returned to bed while Dick and I lay talking until dawn. Once, hearing footfalls in the woods behind the camp, we emerged from the tent into the cold predawn to scan the treeline through the Night Vision apparatus. Panning with the Mag-Lite, I caught the horses standing at attention, ears forward as they stared across camp to the trees where the footsteps had come. Beyond the yellow shine of their eyes, two points of red light that could have been spots on the surface film of my eye winked in the darkness in the direction of the suspended rock sounds. The grass wetted our sockfeet with a cold dew, and the woods breathed silently in and out as if the moonlight were their vaporous breath, hanging on the cold mountain air.

We spent the morning looking for sign in the surrounding woods. Inside the treeline 125 yards out from camp the forest duff was disturbed as if some soft-footed thing had paused there in the night, leaving nothing plainly identifiable as tracks. The sun climbing above the pine trees burned the dew from the grass and penetrated deep inside the woods, lighting the ragged tree spires, depth on depth. Wildflowers unfolded, small white clouds appeared in the sky, and on the mountainside above a herd of grazing elk slipped imperceptibly into the timber and disappeared.

"If you guys were to stay another night I think you'd be okay, probably," Keith said, but Dick shook his head.

"They had us surrounded last night," he said. "My question is, Why? I know you think these things are basically benign, but I'm not so certain. I keep going back to my Marine Corps training, when the only reason you were told to surround something was to take it out."

We broke camp in the still somnolence of noon, watched by the woods that had had us under surveillance for the past three days, and drove out the logging road winding down from the mountain. The road skirted for some miles below the summit of the ridge, then switchbacked in a steep canyon with towers and knobs of rock rising above it to the river. We rumbled across the bridge and stopped to turn the wheel hubs out, looking back at the country we were leaving.

"What do you think now?" I asked Dick. "Is it in there, or isn't it?"

"It's in there," Dick said.

"Then—what is it?"

"I don't know. For now I just want to call it a Being. Something much smarter than it's ever been given credit for."

I remembered something then.

"Did you catch those points of red in the Mag-Lite?" I asked.

"What points of red?"

I told him about the red spots the light had picked out from the darkness in the early morning.

He looked startled. "You didn't tell me about that."

"I forgot. Do you think it's important?"

"They're reported to have red eyeshine," Dick said.

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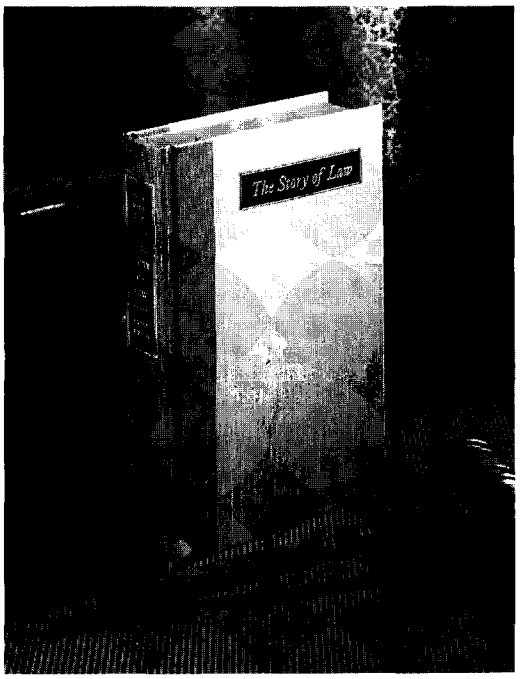

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